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T R SHARMA

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MANORAMA B. TRIKHA

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T R SHARMA

CANADA AND INDIA : AN INDIAN POINT OF VIEW

Interaction between East and West is an age-long story.[1] Prior to the discovery of the 'New World' by Columbus in 1492, the west for India constituted Persia and the European, Asian and African countries situated just in the North and South of the Mediterranean Sea, once known as the Great Sea.[2] Contacts between east and west in the very initial stage were more on intellectual level[3], though trade through the Arabian Sea was also a common phenomenon. However, the invasion of Alexander on India opened the land route for more frequent contacts and also for migration.[4] Carefully sifted ideas and thoughts belonging to higher planes—intellectual and spiritual—moved both ways, i.e., eastward and westward and imperceptibly percolated through the social fabric of different countries.

With the discovery of America, the geographical frontiers of west expanded beyond the Atlantic. Scientific development introduced new modes of travel and communication, resulting in bringing the East and West physically closer. Naturally, interaction between the two, now, is more intense and increasingly consequential. Through the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries the two cultural modes have developed such a deep political, social and intellectual contacts as they have not only become interdependent but also have passed through an unrecognizable transformation in several respects. While the West has made a perceptible transformation take place in the eastern countries, the

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influence of the East on the materialistically advanced western countries is of a deeper but imperceptible nature :

> Between East and West the cultural wind blows both ways, 'though a hasty present-day inspection might suggest that it blew mainly eastward .... The wind from the East is quieter, older, less immediately detectable; it penetrates and mingles, and its note is deep.... Today the student from the orient may find himself to some degree at homes in Western thought for the elements of his own culture that are mixed in it.[5]

The global picture, as obtainable today blasts Rudyard Kipling's notorious prophecy, "East is East and West is West/ And never the twain shall meet." The fact is the East and the West have met never to part company. There is an indissoluble cultural meeting now. In such a situation it is in the fitness of things that technologically and economically more advanced western countries have been making genuine efforts to promote cultural and intellectual ties with India and other eastern countries. In the sixties of this century, with the efforts of the then Indian Prime Minister, Late Lal Bahadur Shastri a laudable step was taken to bring Canada and India closer by establishing cultural and academic bonds. For this purpose Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute was brought into existence and efforts ever since then have been afoot to dissolve as far as possible the geographical and natural barriers and inculcate a sense of understanding and give and take.

Geographically and culturally, no two countries are farther from each other than India and Canada. Separated on both the sides by huge mass of land and frighteningly vast oceans —Pacific and Atlantic—Canada has seemingly nothing to share with India. Longtitudinally and latitudinally "the twain shall never meet". Situated between 8 degree North to 35 degree North and 70 degree East to 95 degree East, India is a country of varieties and diversities. We have extreme spells of climate from the freezingly cold on the Himalayas to the burning heat on the plains and in the south. It has the highest rainfall in the world in the eastern wing and the lowest in the western region. Its soil is not only multi-coloured but also

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either extremely fertile or altogether barren. The richness of its flora and fauna is inconceivable. Its linguistic variety has no parallel in the world. Its literatures in different languages from the point of view of antiquity, vastness and intensity of thought and emotion and embellishment of language have no match. Its religious and philosophical systems have been the beacon light to the benighted mankind for centuries and still attract hosts of spiritually starving people all over the world. With the ageless Vedas it has been the cradle of human civilization and its cultural history is as old as mankind.

Canada, on the other hand, is one of the youngest nations without antiquity. Sprawling in the extreme north of the Equator from 70 degree North to 90 degree North and 60 degree West to 140 degree West, it is a vast country with sparse population and extremely cold climate and difficult geographical and topographical conditions. It presents a sharp contrast to everything pertaining to India, excepting the fact that its aboriginals are enigmatically known as Indians. It is surrounded by Pacific and Atlantic oceans and naturally has been for centuries inaccessible to man of the Old World. It is a mult-racial nation with English and French as the most dominant races. Its history is hardly three-hundred-year-old and its literature is among the youngest in the world. It has no cultural history and philosophical systems of its own. It is the product of colonization and Industrial Revolution. Because of its earlier liberation from the colonial yoke it could not be exploited to the extent India has been, hence it is much more advanced in science and technology than India. As compared to the vastness of its mass of land it has only small pockets of arable lands. But due to the employment of most modern means of technology it has always surplus production.

Canada has an interesting history of its discovery, settlement and formation of confederation. The word Canada is derived from Huron-Iroquois Kanata which means a village or settlement. On August 13, 1535 Jaqcques Cartier, as reported in the second edition of Haklyut's Principal Navigations (1598—1600), reached the

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eastern shore of Canada with the help of two Indian youths whom he brought back from France. By Canada, at that time, they only meant the village of Stadacona then situated on the future site of Quebec city. Gradually, the name Canada assumed wider meaning, as the French explorers and fur traders pushed westward and southward. Consequently, the area of Canada started expanding. But it could not have its distinct geographical identity till 1791 when the Constitutional Act or Canada Act divided Quebec into two provinces—Upper Canada and Lower Canada. In 1841 there was unification of the two to form Province of Canada. In 1867 the Province of Canada was united with Nova Scotia and New Brunswick under the British North America Act to form "one Dominion under the name of Canada". in 1870 Rupert's Land was purchased and this extended the boundaries of the Dominion to the Rocky Mountains and Arctic Ocean. Next year, i.e., 1871, British Columbia was annexed and this extended the boundaries of Canada from sea to sea. In 1873 Prince Edward Island was added. In 1880 Britain transferred the Arctic Islands. In 1948 the federation was complete when Labrador and Newfoundland joined it. This is how the present Canada came into being. It was in 1867 when Canada achieved independent Dominion status within the British Empire.[6] However, before emerging as a nation Canada passed through many a vicissitude. In the seventeenth century three permanent settlements had been founded in this country. There were God-fearing Puritans who had landed on Plymouth Rock, the French had already settled at Port Royal (1605) and Quebec (1608) and the English at Cupar's Cove in Newfoundland (1610).

As has already been pointed out Indian is a very common term in Canada. All the aboriginals of South, Central and North America are called Indians.[7] It is difficult to say who was the first from India to settle in Canada. However, in Mahabharat there is a reference that Arjuna reached Alaska through Bering Strait. But the reliability of this reference is anybody's guess. The fact is that no convincing traces of human occupation are known from early or Middle Pleistocene deposits and all the human fossils available in North America are of Homo Sapiens Sapiens. There are some

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eccentric suggestions to the effect that man evolved independently in the Americas, or reached there by boat. But it appears that the earliest inhabitants migrated from Asia by land. During the glacial phases of the Pleistocene, when large masses of water were frozen, the sea level fell, exposing a land-bridge across the Bering Strait between Siberia and Alaska. This bridge, however, only afforded access to the Americas when a gap existed between the glaciers of the Rocky Mountains and the great Laurentide ice-sheet of the Hudson's Bay region. Between c. 25,000 and 19,000 ice formed an impregnable barrier across northern Canada. It means that man could have penetrated Southward only before or after that time-span. There are finds from sites in both North America and South America to support an early date for man's arrival. Tools or tool-like objects occur with signs of burning at Lewisville, Texas (with a c.14 date of c. 38,000 B.C.) and on Santa Rosa Island, California (c. 27,650 B.C.). But the Lewisville site appears to be disturbed and the tools from Santa Rosa may be natural pebbles. The definite evidence available suggests that the earliest settlers in America were bands of hunters of mammoth and other big game and they arrived soon after 10,000 B.C.. They spread rapidly in pursuit of abundant game. These early hunting communities are divisible into several groups, on the basis of distinctive types of stone spearhead : Cascade points in Western North America, Lerma points in Mexico and Colvis and Flosom points on the North American plains.

The fact that the settlements were concentrated on the western coast of North America and in Mexico and Peru in South America, imparts reliability to the belief that the earliest inhabitants of the Americas were from Asia and not from Europe. A very rich civilization known as the Maya civilization flourished in Mexico almost a thousand years before Christ. Typical features of the Mayan civilization were hieroglyphic writing, the long count calender (it begins about 613 years before Christ) a distinctive art style, characteristic pottery and the corballed masonary vault. Maya building was remarkable in the sense that it was built without metal tools. They produced coursed ashlar, which they bonded

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with mortar. Much more astonishing was the elaborate and extremely accurate Maya calender, devised to ensure that religious ceremonies were carried out on the prescribed dates. They had the tradition, like that in India, to take bath in rivers and ponds, etc., and observe fasts on the occasion of lunar and solar eclipses. There is probability that this civilization had its roots in some Asian country. Asian emigrants and most probably from India might have settled down there to build up the Mayan civilization on the basis of the traditions they had carried with them from India and other Asian countries. Like Indians, astronomy and astrology were very important for them. They were trampled by Azteks. Subsequently, they were taken over by the army of a Spanish invader known as Hernor Cortiz. Thus by 1519 A.D., the ancient civilization of Mayans was completely destroyed. Who were the people that founded the Mayan civilization is hidden in the womb of time. But there is no denying the fact that they were not the original inhabitants of America and that they did not emigrate from Europe. They were certainly from Asia. Since their traditions, beliefs and rites to a very great extent had such a close similarity with those of India, there is every reason to believe that they migrated from India through Alaska and went down towards the southern region in search of conducive climatic conditions. It is also palpable to reason that the original inhabitants of the 'New World' were called Indians from times immemorial merely because of their migration from this sub-continent. It is also worth mentioning that the Europeans before and at the time of Columbus might have heard from tradition about Indians living across the Atlantic. However, it appears that Canada was the gateway for the Asian emigrants to find new lands across the Pacific and settle down in the southern region, where they had a more favourable climate, as the plains of Canada at that time were thickly frozen and hence absolutely uninhabitable. But with the melting of snow emigrants from Asia might have found places in Canada to settle down. To reiterate this significant point, it is to be noted carefully that the ancient settlement in the 'New World' was on the western coast. This is a very important reason to believe that the earliest emigrants to

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America were from Asia and the path earlier must have been through the Bering Strait, and afterwards by boats through the Pacific ocean. This sets forth that ties between Asia and America (more particularly Canada as it was the gate) existed much before the Europeans had taken over the continent.

The present Canada is a multi-racial country; the overwhelming majority is that of immigrants from England, France and South Asia. Among the South Asian immigrants 55% are Indians. The first emigrants from India were Sikhs who arrived at Vancouver in 1903. Majority of these Sikhs had heard of Canada from British Indian troops in Hong Kong. They had travelled through Canada the previous year on their way to the coronation celebrations of Edward VII. They were tempted by high Canadian wages and hence settled down there. This set in the chain of immigration which soon reached the number of 5209 Indian immigrants by the end of 1908. All of these immigrants had temporarily left their families to seek jobs in Canada. Out of them almost 90% were Sikhs, belonging to the families of farmers of Punjab. Almost all of them settled in British Columbia, the western most province of Canada. This again shows that the settlement along the western coast of Canada, touching the Pacific Ocean, is that of Asians, particularly from India. Of course before them immigrants from Japan and China had also settled down there. This further reinforces the stand that the earliest immigrants to America had been from Asia as the ancient settlements were in the western region of the continent.

Indian immigrants had been granted only limited political and social rights and privileges in British Columbia, as was the case with other Asian settlers. They were disenfranchised in 1907. This resulted in their deprivation of the federal vote and any access to the political office, jury duty, the professions, public-service jobs and labour on public works. In 1908 the federal government made a law which made it obligatory for immigrants to travel to Canada with continuous ticketing arrangements from their native country. There did not exist such arrangements between India and Canada.

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The result was the discontinuance of Indian immigrants, and this was what the federal government aimed at. This law separated immigrated men from their families and stopped the further growth of the community. The law was challenged in courts, but with no avail. This led to political activity of pressure and a party, known as Ghadar Party, was formed with a view to trouncing the British rule in India. There was a direct challenge to the immigration ban. In April 1914, Komagata Maru, a Japanese-owned freighter sailed from Hong Kong to Canada with 376 prospective South Asian immigrants most of them were Indian Sikhs.[8] It was a historic event. The immigration officials of Canada isolated the ship at Vancouver harbour for two months. Ultimately, it was left with no option but to return to India. This flared up the revolutionary activities in India and those who came back from Komagata Maru as a reaction worked for the Ghadar Party. However, with the increasing pressure of the community coupled with the representations by the government of India, the Canadian government relented and in 1919 allowed the wives and children of Indian residents of Canada to immigrate. By the middle of 1920s economic security of Indians increased primarily because of the work in the lumber industry and the sale of wood and sawdust as home-heating fuel. Indians, in the meanwhile, acquired a number of lumber mills. 1920s witnessed the worst economic depression but the Indian immigrants could tide over the difficulty by mutual help. By World War II, Indians in British Columbia had secured the local support to get voting rights. Particularly, the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation lent intensive support to the movement of Indians for enfranchisement. In 1947 British Columbia lifted the ban against voting, etc. With the achievement of Indian freedom, the continuous-passage regulation was also abrogated in 1947. In 1951 an annual quota of 150 Indian immigrants was fixed. This considerably enhanced the number of Indians in Canada. In 1960 the racial and national restrictions were removed fom the immigration regulations. This widened the nature of immigration from India and made it culturally diverse. In the 1950s a sizable number of immigrants consisting of the Sikh relatives of pioneer

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Indian settlers immigrated. But in the 60s of this century immigration to Canada underwent a qualititative change. It was the time when there was explosion of ambition and aspiration among the Indian youths who were born either just before the achievement of freedom or immediately after that. It was also the time when the immigration laws were considerably relaxed to encourage brain-drain. This attracted a large number of Indians, belonging to different parts of the country, to explore better prospects in Canada. The result was the exodus of quite a large number of professionals such as teachers, doctors, university professors, young researchers and scientists to Canada. Now, the migration of unskilled labour had a downward trend as Canadians explicitly showed preference for the highly skilled and professional immigrants from India. Non-discriminatory immigration regulations enforced in 1967 further intensified Indian immigration. Anti-Indian stance in countries like Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Zaire, Fizi, etc., further gave fillip to Indian immigration to Canada.

Till late 1950s almost all Indian immigrants lived in British Columbia. But with the immigration of the professional Indians in the 60s through the Atlantic, the population of Indians started swelling in the eastern part of Canada. Mostly, Indian immigrants live in urban areas. Ninety five percent of them live in Ontario, British Columbia, Alberta and Quebec. Sikhs overwhelmingly live in Vancouver, because of their early migration. These Sikhs in British Columbia are mostly involved in the lumber industry. The professional Indians who migrated to Canada between 1960 and 1975 are well-to-do and are firmly established there. Indian women in Canada are active participants in the economy in different types of dignified jobs. Indians are adjustable by nature and therefore they quite soon get adapted to the Canadian cultural patterns. However, they always maintain a core family tradition and community practice. One problem that most of the Indian immigrants face in Canada is to infuse in their children the Indian values. Quite often they find their efforts go waste. A process of aculturation is going on in Canada. Among the Indians in Canada the Sikhs maintain their ethnic and religious identity distinctly,

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although they are most alive to extra-familial cultural activities. As far back as 1908 they built their first Gurudwara in Canada. Hindus have also built their temples which are visited by people of different ethnic groups for prayer, for annual ceremonies and for important rituals such as marriage and death. Indians support language classes for children and cultural activities such as music and dance. Folk classical music and dance are quite popular with Indian immigrants. They also support newspapers and newsletters and their programming on radio and cable television is rapidly expanding. They however are not active in politics.

Being a multi-racial nation, like India, Canada has developed a culture which is mosaic as it consists of a group of cultures interrelated with one another and set beside the two dominant cultures—English and French. It has several regional sub-cultures also. Then there is a marked difference between the way of life and thought of the west coast Canadians and the east coast Canadians. The Canadians who live in the Prairies are distinctly different from those who live in Quebec, Ontario or Newfoundland. English Canadians, French Canadians and now Indian Canadians are separately recognizable. Canada in this respect is very close to India in which diversity is its strength and richness. Like Canada, India too has divergent religions, races, languages, etc. Here people, living in the north are distinctly different from those living in the south. Hindus are the cultural ancestors of this country and now Muslims and Christians have become the integral part of India's social set-up. We have very ancient tribes spreading all over the country and representing the antiquity of this sub-continent. Linguistically, India is richer in variety than Canada. The question of supremacy of language in this country is as ticklish and sensitive an issue as in Canada. Canada evolved a two language formula—English and French; India to deal with this difficult problem introduced a three language formula—Hindi, English and a language from the South. Indian society is a complex network of relations among ethnic groups as is the case with Canada. It is not only the racial and religious multiplicity but also the caste complexities which are responsible for the social tensions in India.

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In India since times immemorial a few privileged castes have achieved control over vital resources, e.g., jobs, capital, institutional authority, etc. In Canada, too, certain groups enjoy these advantages. They try to protect them and as and when possible extend them. Constitutionally in India nothing is denied to anybody on the basis of caste and creed, but both in India and Canada those who are at the helm of affairs try to deny access to power and control to the neglected groups, and they try to design the institutional and bureaucratic barriers so as to preclude or dilute the attempts by the less privileged groups to bring about any change. The relatively disadvantaged have been putting pressure in both the countries for change in the economic or political situation. However, they may succeed only when the privileged groups relent. Both India and Canada have accommodated and accepted races coming from different parts of the world, of course for different reasons. India had faced invaders till the end of the eighteenth century. Greeks were the first to conquer part of it. Some of them settled down permanently here to be assimilated unrecognizably in the course of time. Huns, Shakas, Kushans, etc., also met the same fate. But when Muslims conquered the Indo-Gangetic plain, they ruled over this country for more than a thousand years. They settled down here, started the process of conversion and always kept their independent identity, never to be swallowed up by Hinduism. This gave birth to racial and cultural dualism in India. Of course, the British rule imparted another dimension to the cultural and racial dualism of this country by introducing Christianity. Before and during the Muslim rule whatever new religions were started, they were in most of the cases offshoots of Hinduism. Parsies and Jews are also the important citizens of this country. Parsies, in particular, have played a very significant role in shaping the economy of this country. In Canada, in addition to the cultural and racial dualism there are also such races as Italian, Spanish, Indian, South Asian and African, though they are of little consequence. India and Canada here differ in the sense that India has two dominant races, embracing two different religions—Hindu and Muslim; the two important races in Canada—English and French—have the same

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religion—Christianity. As in India many communities and races have been unidentifiably assimilated with Hinduism, so in Canada there has been a certain amount of assimilation of native people and several other cultural communities with the dominant anglophone.

This brief survey of Indian immigrants in Canada and of cultural and social composition in two countries, sets forth that Indians have become an integral part of the multi-racial Canadian society and that they form an effective component of Canadian social set-up. As such there is a strong basis for very intimate and constant interaction between Canada and India. Both are the members of the Commonwealth which gives its members an access to an expanding network of economic, social and educational programmes, without any condition of uniformity of outlook or purpose in return. Under the Colombo Plan of 1950 a lot of development assistance has been given by the members of the Commonwealth to one another. Through Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation (1971) a huge aid is given to the developing countries and Canada alone has been providing more than 40%of its budget. Again through Commonwealth Youth Programme, Commonwealth Scholarships and Commonwealth Games, etc., too, India and Canada not only help each other but can also strengthen their cultural and academic bonds further. Canada, being economically and technologically more advanced and viable, has been doing a laudable job by supporting the 'new nations', which emerged after World War II as a result of decolonization and which are econmically very backward owing to their prolonged exploitation by the colonial powers. By founding External Aid Office (1960) and its subsequent conversion into the Canadian International Development Agency in 1968, Canada has been making substantially concrete and sincere efforts to alleviate the condition of needy nations.

After this discussion of similarities and dissimilarities in the social composition of Canada and India and of the efforts Canada has been making to interact with India, a relevant question that arises is to identify the areas of academic activities of mutual

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profitability. From the Indian point of view fruitful empirical studies in the field of social sciences can be made pertaining to the following aspects of Indian immigrants in Canada:

1. **Economic Condition of Indian Immigrants in Canada:** As has already been seen a large number of Indians have settled down permanently in Canada—in eastern, middle and western region. With different variables—such as the Indian immigrants in the east, those in the west, professional immigrants and non-professional, the Sikh, the Hindu and Muslim immigrants, the earlier Indian immigrants and those migrated later—studies of the economic condition of Indian immigrants can be made. Another useful aspect of study can be a comparison of the economic condition of Indian immigrants in Canada and that of the other South Asian and African immigrants. And yet another study in this field may be made by evaluating the contribution of Indian immigrants in Canada to the economic uplift of their families in India.

2. **Family Life of Indian Immigrants:** In India we have a tradition of well-knit family unit with intense clanishness. We have well-defined and well-understood duties for each member of a family. In the west family concept is absolutely different. An interesting study can be made pertaining to the impact of the western family concept on Indian immigrants in Canada. In this case also different variables are possible.

3. **Social Life of Indian Immigrants in Canada:** Indians in Canada live in pockets sprawling all over the country. A study is required to see their social intercourse among themselves and with their Canadian counterparts. Hindu castes, religion, social status, etc., can be some of the variables for study.

4. **Religious Life of Indian Immigrants:** Indian religions are highly ritualistic. Many of the rituals do not evoke any conviction. In Canada the life is highly mechanical, mechanized and the outlook of people is science-oriented. Naturally, many a ritual of Hindus, in particular, will not be approvingly nodded to in Canada. Temples, Gurudwaras, Mosques, of late are coming up in Canada in large number. It shows that Indian immigrants are trying hard

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to maintain their religious identities. But have they made any change in their rituals and ceremonies or are more orthodox to observe them? This is an important aspect that deserves investigation.

These are only a few areas for emperical research in the field of social sciences that can be taken up by Indians and Canadians to understand the contribution of the two nations to the cultural, religious, social and economic life of each other. However, such topics are not exhaustible. On conceptual level also very useful studies can be made by the scholars of the two countries. For this literatures and languages of the two countries are the most suitable areas. Canadian literature is not very old. However on the following aspects of literatures of the two countries meaningful research investigations will be academically viable.

1. **Folk Lores of India and Canada:** Before the Europeans occupied Canada and created literature in English and French, there had been a rich tradition of folk tales and folk songs of Indians[9] and Innuits[10] in Canada. Folk literature is of immense value to get an insight into the culture of any society. Describing it, Edith Fowke writes:

> Folk-tales and folk-songs are our unwritten prose and poetry: they are handed down orally from generation, exist in many different forms, and tend to lose their folk quality once they are frozen in print. As the literature of an unlettered people, they often reflect more clearly than printed literature the culture and development of a country in its early stages.[11]

In Canada several thousands of folk-tales of Indians and Eskimos have been collected and published. Most of these tales deal with "creation myths" or "sacred legends" which unfold the story of their origin. Like many folk-tales of India and other ancient countries, there are several stories in Canada pertaining to calamities that caused destruction of the world. The most popular folk-tale of Canadian Indians is of a great flood which reminds us of the common legend of deluge in India and the Biblical story of the same

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theme. There are such tales as tell us about the destruction of the world by fire, blizzards or drought. Many stories describe the efforts of various animals to liberate the sun from the clutches of some inimical power. Jesuit Fathers were the first to take note of the folk-tales of Canadian Indians. In the *Jesuit Relations*, in the second half of the seventeeenth century, they recorded a number of Huron and Algonkin tales. Then, Father Lacombe and Father Petitot noted tales of the western and northern tribes. However, it was Henry Rowe Schoolcraft who first recorded the Canadian folktales in English. Between 1812 and 1842 he had been an Indian agent among the Ojibwas of the Great-Lakes. But the most important collector of these tales was the Rev. S.T. Rand, whose *Legends of the Micmacs* (1894) is a reference book in this regard. India has a much richer treasure of folk-tales, many of which have travelled to different lands of Asia and Europe.

As was the case with most of the countries, Canadian forests and plains, too, vibrated with songs of the aboriginals before the modern civilization of Europe metamorphosed the complexion of the old social set-up. The pre-European Canadian society, like that of India, was intensely musical as the aboriginals believed that the invisible voice of music could have an access to the imperceptible power that permeates nature. They believed that this would enable them to succeed in all their pursuits. Song was an inseparable part of every aspect of their lives. Miss Alice Fletcher, the earliest collector of the folksongs of Canadian Indians writes: "In his sports, in his games, when he wooed, and when he mourned... the Indian sang in every experience of life from the cradle to the grave."[12] These songs pertain to prayers for rain, warrior songs, dirges for the dead, songs of welcome, and hymns of victory. They are important to get an insight into the culture of Canadian Indians, but they are almost untranslatable. The occasions, ceremonies and rituals associated with these songs are almost the same as is the case with Indian folksongs.

Canadian folk-literature is divisible into four groups, representing the traditions of Canada's main races : 1) Aboriginal (Indian and Innuit), 2) French Canadian, 3) Anglo-Canadian

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(English, Irish, Scottish, Welsh), 4) Other ethnic groups. This brief description of Canadian folklore shows that it is rich enough to be compared with the folk literature of India. In both the countries because of the predominance of rural population (in Canada at least upto World War II), a high percentage of illiteracy in all the parts and groups of India, and in certain groups in earlier times in Canada, and the use of folk-literature to whip up local and national consciousness, folk-lore forms an important component of their cultural fabric. In both the countries, geographicaal conditions and a diverse linguistic and ethnocultural structure do not allow a concise description of folk-literature. A major project can be undertaken to compare the folk-literature of the two countries in order to show kinship in man's response to the forces of nature in the early stage of human civilization, irrespective of clime and culture.

2. **Canadian English Literature and Indian English Literature :** As far as Canadian literature in English is concerned it is quite young as compared to Indian literature. However, Indian literature written in English is a good subject for comparison as it is almost as old as Canadian literature in English. Its origin can be traced from the times when the Europeans settled down in the eastern region of Canada. The pre-Confederation poetry, i.e., written before 1867 is of little importance. It is imitative of the Neo-Classical English poets of the eighteenth century such as Pope and Goldsmith and of the Romantic poets such as Wordsworth, Byron, Shelley and Thomas Moore. Almost all the poets of this period are amateurs. This was the time when in India English imperialists gradually tightened their grip. Indians acquired proficiency in the language of their rulers and started writing poems, plays, etc., in English. Like their Canadian counterparts, the Indian poets in English in the nineteenth century were imitative. An interesting study can be made of the influence of the English Romantic poets on the early Canadian and Indian poetry written in English. However, the Canadian poetry written in English in the 20th century is important for Indians for academic purposes. The Canadian English poetry and Indian English poetry of this century

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have two distinct voices—the traditional and the modern. Modern tendencies slowly got better of the traditional trends in both the countries. In Canada modern tones in poetry appeared almost a decade earlier than in India. In Canada new poetry was introduced in 1936 with the publication of a pioneer anthology called *New Provinces* which had a small preface written by F.R. Scott, one of the contributors. This inaugurated modern poetry in Canada. In India it was only in the fifties when Nissim Ezekiel published his poems in English that new trends in Indian English poetry appeared. As a matter of fact it was P. Lal who in his Introduction to *Modern Indo-Anglian Poetry* outlined the definite trends of New Poetry. It is an anthology of poems like *New Provinces*. Both the anthologies in two different countries—India and Canada —and with somes gap of time brought about almost identical changes in the field of poetry written in English in Canada and India. Poets in both the countries abandoned past poetic practices, rejecting the norms of punctuation, typographical conventions and traditional verse forms. They endeavoured to cultivate new subject-matter, mostly related to the modern city, its variousness, its social evils, its machinery, its politics, its intellectual predilection for the new in art, its ironies, tensions and structural complexities. Comparative study of these two anthologies and the changing modes in the poetry of the two countries will be a very useful intellectual pursuit. Such studies can also be made in the field of the novels and dramas, written in English in both the countries.

3. **Indian Poetics and Canadian Poetry in English :** Another significant area of interest for researchers and academicians of the two countries is the study of Canadian English Poetry in the light of Sanskrit poetics. That Sanskrit Poetics has universal application is an irrefutable fact. Instead of studying literature of any country in isolation, efforts should be made in the direction of intertextual and integrated studies. Roland Barthes suggests :

> All classes, all human groups have their narratives, enjoyment of which is very often shared by men, even opposing, cultural

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> backgrounds. Caring between good and bad literature, narrator is international, transhistorical, transcultural : it is simply there, like life itself.[13]

In a creative artist there are unnamed chords of responses to the interacting mood. His works do not belong to any particular culture or time. The poet submits to the world as a seed does to the earth. He sprouts in the poetic language with a vision which transcends the bounds of space and time. There is nothing like an isolated poetic creation. As such literary principles and philosophical ideas of universal merits can usefully be applied to any poetic piece of worth. Literary composition, though follows certain laws, yet it transcends them and is not a slave to literary laws of any particular country or age. In this regard, Rabindra Nath Tagore says :

> When we come to literature we find that though it conforms to rules of grammar, it is yet a thing of joy, it is freedom itself. The beauty of a poem is bound by strict laws, yet it transcends them. The laws are its wings, they do not keep it weighed down, they carry it to freedom. Its form is in law, but its spirit is in beauty. Law is a first step towards freedom and beauty is the complete liberation which stands and shines on the pedestal of law.[14]

As such Canadian poets of genuine poetic beauty can be studied in the light of different schools of Sanskrit poetics such as Rasa theory, Dhvani theory and Vakrokti, etc.

4. **Canadian English and Indian English :** English language now does not belong to England alone. It has spread all over the world and is used with great competence and confidence in India, African countries and Carribean and Latin American countries which otherwise have their own languages. In America, Australia, NewZealand and Canada it is the first language of most of the citizens of these countries. Literary works of abiding worth are being produced in English in India. A linguistic study of the

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literary works of Canada and India will be a rewarding academic exercise.

Thus intellectual and cultural intercourse between India and Canada is an absolute need of the day. All efforts should be made to intensify activities in this direction.

REFERENCES AND NOTES

[1]See Aeschylus's *Suppliant Women* : "And Tales I know, how Indian women roam/By camels drawn, each in the tented home." Stories of *Jatakas, Panch Tantra,* and *Hitopadesh* travelled across the Mediterranean Sea through Persia, etc. Maulavi Rumi's *Masanavi* sets forth this fact.

[2]See Chaucer's *Prologue.*

[3]Jawahar Lal Nehru refers to the visit of Pythagorus of Greece to India in *Discovery of India.* It is believed that his ideas related to soul and its transmigration are based on his experiences in India.

[4] Indians went out of India through the Khyber Pass in groups and settled down in countries around the Black Sea. Romas of Romania, leading the life of gipsies, practise and observe Indian rites and believe that their motherland is India.

[5]*Times Literary Supplement* of 26.12.58, p. 751.

[6]One interesting fact to note is that in the middle of the last century when Canada gradually freed itself from the British domination, the Britishers tightened their grip over India after the proclamation fo Queen Victoria on November 1, 1858.

[7]It has originated with Christopher Columbus, who thought he had reached India, while in fact, he had crossed the Atlantic and reached the shores of North America. The term Indian, has been in use ever since then. Indians are identified alongwith Innuit and Metis as the aborigines of Canada in Section 35(2) of the Constitution Act, 1982. People who are legally defined as Indians are known as status Indians. Nonstatus Indians are those who are of Indian ancestry but through intermarriage with whites or by giving up their status rights, have foregone their legal status though retaining their Indian identity.

[8]In 1913, thirty eight Sikhs contested the continuous-passage order and were admitted. This encouraged others to charter the *Komagata Maru.* When it arrived at Vancouver in May 1914, the Canadian Government refused to yield

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and most of the passengers were detained on board. They waited for two months. The immigration authorities at Vancouver manipulated to keep them out of court. On losing the case *Komagata Maru* on July 23 sailed to Calcutta. There it was suspected by the police. On disembarkation, 20 passengers were killed in a shooting exchange with police. This strengthened nationalist feelings in India, but it had no effect on Canadian Government.

[9]This refers to Canadian Indians.

[10]Innuit's simple meaning is "people". They were earlier called "Eskimos" by Europeans—a depreciatory term meaning "eaters of meat". This term was applied to them by Indian groups. Innuits are one of the original groups to inhabit the northern regions of Canada. There are eight main groups of Innuits—the Labrador, Ungava, Baffin Island, Iglulik, Caribou, Netsilik, Copper and Western Arctic Innuit. They speak a common language known as Inuktitut, or Inuttituut. Traditionally, the Innuit were hunters.

[11]Edith Fowke, 'Folktales and Folksongs', in *Literary History of Canada* edited by Carl F. Klinck (University of Toronto Press, 1965), p. 163.

[12]Ibid., p. 167.

[13]Roland Bathes, Image Music, Text, Trans. Stephen Heath (New York : Hill and Wang, 1970, p. 79.

[14]Rabindranath Tagore, *Sadhana,* (Macmillan & Co. Ltd.), pp. 98-99.

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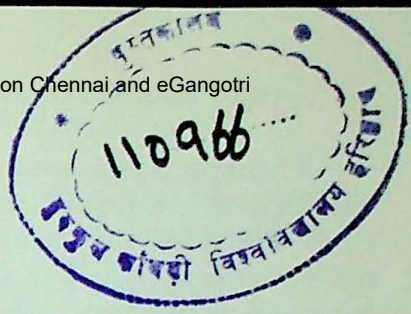

OM P. JUNEJA

MODERNISM, POST MODERNISM AND LITERARY CULTURE IN THE FIELD OF CANADIAN STUDIES

Lamenting the disappearance of Canada, George Grant in his *Lament for a Nation* ascribed it to the modernist project. The assumptions of modernity, he lamented, appear to be "inevitable, as being the expression of the highest wisdom, that the race has distilled. The assumptions appear so inevitable that to entertain the possibility of their falsity may seem to be the work of a mad man" (Grant, 1970, 95). It is in this inevitability of modernity that Grant locates the disappearance of Canada. In his essay "A Piatitude" in *Technology and Empire,* he argues that "the desire to the planetary technical future is in any case inevitable, but those who try to divert, to limit, or even simply stand in fear before some of its applications find themselves defenceless, because the disappearance of any speech by which the continual changes involved in that drive could ever be thought of as deprivals." (1969, 139). The "disappearance of any speech" here is synonymous with the disappearance of Canada, because Canada has failed to evolve a discourse of disapproval/ diavowal of the American Technological Empire. Robertson Davies, the post modernist Canadian novelist, is of the opinion that modernity has demythologized the Canadian "myth of Difference". Northop Frye too expresses his agreement with George Grant and Robertson Davies when he claims that Canadians live in a post-Canadian world. This world, believes Frye, is not Americanized, as Americanization is just another word for modernization.

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If anything, Americans are the first to be modernized. Since America is the spearhead of modernity, Octavio Paz believes that the Third World too is condemned to modernity : counter cultures and subcultures existing in these countries can be seen as expressions of discontent with modernity. They are deliberate inventions of difference where the differences have already vanished.

This fear of the modernist project lamented by George Grant in the fear of disappearance of Canada, is symptomatic of the revolt that the post-modern has called on the modernist project. Post modernist philosophers like Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida question the basic premises of modernism. Michel Foucault, for example, presents a critique of modernity by questioning all the three categories of rationality, homogenization and universal liberalism. Rationality which forms the basis of modernity is under heavy attack in Foucaultian thinking. Every form of reason, believes Foucault, contains within itself its own form of unreason. All that rationalization does is to merely supress the hidden form of unreason. Jaques Derrida questions the concepts of universalism and homogenization. He privileges a decentred view of reality over the centralized notion of universalism which desires to incorporate diverese groups into one culturally unified whole. With the recent death of Marxism, the legitimacy of the replacement of religion by ideology is also questioned. New Historicism and cultural relativism now proclaim their belief in the variability of human nature—a variability which is defined by history or culture. Similarly, the autonomy of realms of cultural modernism, economic capitalism and political liberalism is also being questioned and newer disciplines cutting across the borders of the conventional disciplines are being established. The cultural modernism opening ordered perceptions of space and time providing a syntax to political existence, has come to a close.

If cultural modernism is dead or is dying, if the march of the technological engine of unlimited progress is being halted, if the autonomy of the realms is being questioned, and if religion is once

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again attempting to replace ideology, the question that needs to be answered is : what holds things together? Is there still a centre? Or are there many centres?

The question of a centre or many centres has always been the essential Canadian question. This question has been asked for the last three hundred years, more so since 1867 when Canada become a Federation. And yet, there is no final answer as there cannot be a final answer to the question of nationhood which has been understood at least in three ways :

(a) the concept of "political, nationality" —comprising of all those living in a given territory under one sovereign regime.

(b) "Objective" definitions of nationhood including definitions based on race, colour, language, religion, etc.

(c) "Subjective" definitions of nation, arguing that the only factor which counts is the constantly reaffirmed sense of allegiance, given freely by citizens whatever their "objective" characteristics.

(Daadler, 1987, 38–39).

While Canada has political nationality, the "objective" and "subjective" definitions of nationhood are always at play in making it a colony of France, Great Britain or U. S. A. A colonized suffers from what an Australian poet called "cultural cringe", a habit of self debasement before the wisdom of the metropolitan centres of culture. The Canadian intellectual till a few decades ago had these "cultural cringes" – quite often.

The situation seems to have changed in 1970s when the Associtation of Universities and Colleges of Canada established a commission on Canadian Studies chaired by Professor T. H. B Symons who issued the report of this commission in three volumes— the first two in March 1976 and the third one in 1984. "The Symons report," comments Alan F. J. Artibise, "touched a nerve in Canada; in fact, the response to the Commission was extraordinary, demonstrating in unmistakable manner the

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widespread concern about the matters on which it had been asked to report"(Artibise 1985, 7). The sheer volume of response would give you an idea of the Canadian anxiety to overcome the "colonial cringe". Over one thousand briefs and thirty thousand letters were received. Over two thousand academic institutions across Canada sought meetings with the Commission. More than two thousand five hundred people attended public hearings held across the country. The remarkable response continued long after the reports were published. All told these papers now occupy some fifty filing cabinets. Together they constitute a very interesting and valuable scurce of information and opinion about the issues of concern to the Canadians and about the way in which Canadians have perceived themselves and their country in the decade from 1972 to 1983.

This highly positive and very constructive response gave the necessary academic legitimacy for Canadian Studies to Canadians. The Commission justifies CS as an activity for the advancement of self knowledge and not an exercise in narrow nationalism. Explaining the need for Canadian Studies, Artibise states, "It links Canadian scholarly activity to the rest of the world. But it does more. It makes a knowledge of other lands and other times essential to our own land and ourselves". Justifying the claim of Canadian Studies as an intellectual discipline, he remarks, "The point is, the Canadian experience deserves attention not simply because it is Canadian but because it has value as a subject for intellectual examination" (Artibise 1985, 9). An attempt is thus made to justify the valuelessness of Canadian Studies which can be pursued as an academic discipline.

Right Honourable Brain Mulroney, the Prime Minister of Canada in a message to the international community of Canadianists said, "The role that CS scholars and organizations such as International Council for Canadian Studies play in researching and disseminating information on Canada is immeasurable. The impact of study and research undertaken by these scholars has already been felt, and will continue to grow, as

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they return to become involved in the government, business and intellectual leadership of their countries". (Mulroney, 4). Thus the official version makes the international Canadianist a cultural ambassador of Canada in his home country. It also fulfils Canada's wish to make itself seen on the world stage. Hence Canadian Studies are not seen as a policy of direct influence or specific benefit. Canada, however, is a product available in the world cultural market place competing with such cultural products as American Studies, Australian Studies, Indian Studies, etc.

If the evergrowing number of the international community of Canadianists numbering around five thousand is any indicator, the Canadian cultural market place is being flooded with these ambassadors of Canada who are supposed to quietly influence government, business and intellectual leadership of their countries. Canadian official version, taken at its face value, does not encourage a genuine inquiry in the field of Canadian Studies for its own sake. It has a political value and that political value is forgrounded in the official documents on Canadian Studies. The Symons report recognized the political value of Canadian Studies when it stated :

> Canada stands alone among the world's industialized nations in lacking a well developed policy regarding her cultural relationship with foreign countries; mechanism for conducting external cultural and academic relations are half a century out of date; government support has been meagrer, haphazard, and arbitrary, and there has been a failure to sustain initiatives and to promote opportunities. (Symons, II, 40).

The Canadian Department of External Affairs seems to have recognised the initiatives required and the opportunities to be exploited when it set up a separate Academic Relations Division in 1976–77 for promoting Canadian Studies outside of Canada. Consequently, the International Council for Canadian Studies today is a United Nations–like governing body overseeing Canadian Studies in about 25 countries.

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Canadian Studies in Canada similarly began as a "political" programme. Stanley McMullin concludes his history of the programme at Waterloo with the statement that "While CS here began as a political instrument for change, it has now become a distinctive programme with a distinctive approach to Canadian issues". (Berry, 12). The maturity of Canadian Studies programmes at Waterloo, however, does not under-rate its political value as an instrument of change—a change which intended to take Canada out of the "cultural cringe" of a colonized nation. Has Canada achieved its objective?

To answer this question we may have to go back to the question of Canadian identity raised at the beginning of this paper. The three ways of defining nationhood could also be the ways of defining Canadian identity : (a) Canada as political nationality, (b) Canada as "objective" identity based on colour, ethenicity, cultural traits etc. (c) subjective identity : a reaffirmed sense of allegiance.

Canada as a political identity has never been questioned, while Canada as an objective identity has always been in a fluid state. It has been tapped by the Canadian Studies project with the result that Canada has now become visible. Its culture is being seen as distinct and the academic credentials of the discipline of Canadian Studies are being acclaimed. Thus by promoting Canadain Studies, Canada has achieved a national identity formed as much by self examination as by the reflected image of itself in the mirror of Canadian Studies abroad. The discipline of Canadian Studies has thus helped in the realisation of T. H. B. Symon's vision expressed in *To Know Ourselves.*

Inaugurating India's first International Seminar on "National Identity and French Canadian Literature" at the M. S. University of Baroda in January 1990, Late Professor R. C. Patel, the Vice chancellor said :

> When I found that three thousand five hundred academicians from twenty two countries of the world are engaged in Canadian Studies, I got curious about the fact that how people from Russia and China collaborate with people in America,

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England and other capitalist democracies of the world? What is the common academic ground on which they meet? It certainly is Canada. Is it an area study programme in all these countries? If so, why then an International council? The obvious answer to these questions is that Canadian Studies is not an area study programme. It goes beyond that because it brings together people from diverse disciplines and diverse cultures to study Canada in relation to their disciplines and their cultures. Thus, Canadian Studies is developing as an interdisciplinary comparative study programme around the world. It is in this area of a multidisciplinary comparative research methology to which people in Baroda contribute.

The Canadian Studies project then essentially is a project "to know ourselves" : Canadians as Canadian, Indian Canadianists as comparativists to know themselves through Canadian parallaxes.

The role of Indian Canadianist to know himself or herself through Canadian parallaxes situates an academic in an unknown and untrodden territory. Not that such territorial grounds have not been broken in India. We may have at least a dozen Americanists in any Indian university. What is new about the Indian Canadianist is the Canadian parallax which is the pacifist, anticolonial and pluralistic without being aggressive and coersive. Conflict resolution in a federal polity is a specialised area of Canadian Studies.

Let me argue the case of Canadian Studies through a literary perspective as it is literature which outnumbers the other disciplines within Canadian Studies. Here is some statistics reflected in a few directories of Canadian Studies.

At the International level, let me refer to the *Directory of Canadianists* published by the International Council for Canadian Studies in 1989. The Directory has an alphabatical list of 3,800 individuals throughout the world who share an interest in Canada. These entries are classified according to thirty areas of specialization in about twenty five countries. If we look at the research areas of the individual members, English Canadian

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Literature (447) and Literature (266) together is represented by 713 members. As no separate figures are available for French Canadian Literature, except Quebec Studies, we may believe that at least 40% to 50% of these specialists will be using literary base, the total number of the literary constituency thus is around 856. The next discipline in the descending order is history represented by 458 members, followed by Political Science and International Relations (together) at 449. The discipline of Quebec Studies and Geography have 283 and 173 members. The disciplines of Law, Business and Trade; and Sociology are in the range of 120 and 110. Thus, the literary constituency of this apex body of Canadianists is almost double than its next competitor, History. If this is the story at the International level, it is no different in Alberta. Here are the statistics made available in the *Directory of Canadianists in Alberta* published by the University of Calgary in July 1990. The Directory has 107 entries listing Canadianists working in the universities, colleges, archives, museums and also independent researchers in Alberta. The disciplines of Literature and History are represented by 21 entries each, followed by Political Science : 8, Sociology : 7 and other disciplines like Art, Muselolgy, etc. *The UBC Directory of Canadianists* published in April 1990 lists 124 faculty members whose scholarly work relates to the study of Canada. This represents almost 7 percent of the 1800 full-time faculty at UBC in Vancouver. The break up of membership according to disciplines is : Geography 15; Literature including French Canadian Literature 15, Business and Trade : 12; Sociology : 11, History : 9, Political Science : 7, etc.

Thus the two Canadian directories of Alberta and the UBC keep Literature as high as History and Geography. Here too literature ranks either the highest or equal to the highest representation in Canadian Studies. The story is no different in the U. S. A. According to a poll conducted by the American Council for Quebec Studies recently, 32% of the respondents indicated an interest in literature, 15% in Political Science, 13% in History, 13% in Language and 10% in Geography. Other fields of interest

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included Economy, Sociology and Business, (*The International Canadianists*, Vol. II, Number 1, January 1991, p. 2).

The question that we would like to ask is : why is literature so well represented in Canadian Studies. One possible answer for foreign interest in Canadian Literature could be that it is available as research data easier than say the research data in geography or anthropology which need field trips and all that goes with it. This however is not very convincing because some British historians and geographers like Ged Mactin and W.H. Williams at the University of Edinburgh have done excellent work in these areas. The more convincing result for the popularity of Canadian Literature among Canadian Studies Scholars is the Canadian literary culture which recognizes the voice of the "other" more often than the hegemonic literatures like the British and the American. This is demonstrated by the fact that more Governor Generals Awards have gone to minority writers like Josef Skvorecky, Joy Kogawa, M G Vassanji and others recently than ever. The cultural diversity in Canada is a recognized fact in the Canadian Literary canon now, which has opened up to accept such feminist text as Aritha Van Herk's *No Fixed address* (1986). The 'Canadianness' of Canadian literature is now being defined in terms of the multi-ethnic identity of its literature. The "mainstream" literary canon of defining Can Lit as Anglophone and Frenchophone literature has been punctured to accept the multinational and multi-ethnic nature of Canadian Literature as one third of Canada is neither English nor French. This "other" Canada has now exploded in the voices of Hemani Bannerji, Neil Bissoondath, Joy Kogawa, Tomson Highway, Mordlcai Richleer, Josef Skvorecky, Naim Kattan, Rohinton Mistry, Sam Savlon and many others. Their literary works in English and French as the works of many other writers in their "heritage languages" like Ukrainian, Yiddish, Polish, Italian, Urdu or Panjabi reflect the complexity of Canadian minority writing. "The recognition of this complexity" remarks Enoch Padolsky, "highlights the futility (and distortion) of previous 'mainstream' attempts to assimilate such a diverse body of literature into a fixed

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and preconcieved 'Canadian' critical frame". (Padolsky, 1991, 122).

A direct consequence of considering the minority writing is the broadening of Canadian Literature into an international arena. Some immigrant writers like Sam Selvon and Josef Skvorecky have an international reputation. Many of these writers set their works in other countries as well as in Canada. Rohinton Mistry, for example, is as much at home in India as in Canada in his fiction. These writers have acquired an "international intratextuality". The question being asked therefore is : on what basis can Canadian Literature be restricted to merely English and French language writing. The success of journals like *Toronto South Asian Review* representing minority voices in English language, is the story of internationalization of Canadian Literary culture which is pushing the "Canadian postmodern" which has a radical mistrust of the totalizing literary concepts. Post modernism in Canada has allied itself with minority positions. This has, therefore, had a considerable effect on the status of Canadian literature as a special literary field.

Canadian Litereature according to Frank Davey, was founded in the 1960s and early 1970s as a University subject area on a peculiar combination of humanism and structuralism. Its pervasive assumption was the existence of a universal humanity within which a Canadian could offer a specific pattern of harmonious variation. The last decade of the 1980s has seen attacks on the humanistic theorists like George Woodcock, Northop Frye and Clara Thomas and structuralists mapping of Margaret Atwood, E. Jones, etc.

The process of decentralization in Canadian Literature can best be illustrated by the recent politics of English Canadian poetry anthologies. A fall out of this process is the decease of some of the best known poetry publishing presses of 1970s like House of Anansi, Clarke Irwin, Lester and Orpen Denys. Some major publishing houses like Oxford University Press and Porcepic have virtually stopped publishging single author collection of poetry. Only one major Canadian publisher, McClelland and Stewart

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publishes two titles in each of the spring and fall regularly. However a lot of poetry is still published by small presses with just one or two full-time employees. Most of these publishers are assisted by the Canada Council "Block Grant". Such presses, according to Frank Davey, "produced an average of 65 poetry titles annually between 1983 and 1986. Many more titles are published by even smaller presses, whose books do not meet the Canada Council's minimum requirements of 49 pages and 500 copy press-runs". All these poetry presses do not have the means to make themselves and their books known nationally. Most of these books do not reach metropolitan and University bookstores. These books are distributed locally. The individual author collections are being replaced by poetry anthologies as anthology of prairie writing, black women's poetry, Quebec drama, Newfoundland voices, *Alberta Bound*, South Asian Canadian writing, Manitoba Fiction—each one published by a small or regional press.

This shift in publishing from national presses to small presses, from the individual poetry collections to regional or ideological anthologies is symptomatic of the postmodern condition of Canada. It is a condition which has literally de-centred "national consciousness" to a variety of special community focusses and interest groups. Canadian literary culture has taken note of this significant change by recognizing the voices of the "other" in Canada and also in the writings of the Allophones who writes neither in English nor in French the two official languages of Canada. This pluralistic literary perspective views Canadian identity in terms of multi-cultural and multi-national identities and thus acquires an international identity. Michael Thorpe calls this process as "internationalisation of Canadian literatures" — a process which not only legitimizes ethnic minority literatures, it also attempts to value it as "international" literature. This "construction of a Canadian literary canon not as a single unit centrally modelled, or even centrally gathered, but of an ongoing dialogue joined by multiplicity of groups and regions" (Davey, 1991) reflects the Canadian post modern condition more than any other discipline within the field of Canadian Studies, which I

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ventured to argue, is an off-shot of Canadian anxiety resultant from invisibility on the one hand and a desire for modernity in a post modern world on the other. The poltical value of the field of Canadian Studies is located in the on-going debate between the modernist project and the post modern reality. This political value embedded in Canadian parallexes encourages a perpetual state of flux, a process of accommodation and an ongoing search for the mythical Canadian identity.

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MANORAMA B. TRIKHA

CONTEMPORARY CANADIAN POETRY BY WOMEN: "A COSMOS OF MISCELLANY"

To understand the literature of any country it is essential to know two things: (a) its geographical, historical and sociotemporal conditions, and (b) the nature of transfiguring processes of its imagination, which, again, is product of its natural environment. It is especially true of a country like Canada – "a Cold Kingdom" to use Patrick Anderson's words from "Cold Collaguy" for more than many reasons. In "Notes on The Canadian Imagination" David Stouck makes an observation that "at the heart of every imaginative response, buried however deeply, is a vision of human existence"... and that the Canadian imagination is different being "obssessed with the limitations rather than the possibilities of human existence".[1] The comment invites a serious attention. It is difficult to deny a grain of truth in it. Its obsession with "limitations" has significant reasons: (a) Its geographical conditions, which are extremely turbulent and rigorous, make survival rather than freedom a great fact of Canadian life; (b) Its society consists of diverse socio-cultural groups which has given it unique patterns of 'cultural mosaic.' Hence, there is a strong tendency among its people to hold on to what is known and safe; they wish to preserve their own values however humble they may be; (c) the nation has suffered tremendously by comparisons and hence faces serious identity crisis. These factors collectively define what is Canada? What is a Canadian? And what is Canadian Literature? They have provided its major literary themes. The terror gives it the tragic

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theme revealed through the major symbols of bare and bleak landscape; second, the values patterns impart it the essential emotional themes of love and domestic security expressed through the major images of a home or a cottage and the third is the theme of quest for identity worked through an image of a lost stranger in the wilderness.

If in the sixties the doubt, which creative writers including the critics, shared with Emily Montague, the heroine of *The History of Emily Montague* (1769) that here "Genius will never mount high, where the faculties of the wind are benumbed half the year." In the seventies critics found it alive but limited in its potentialities, while the decade of the eighties discovered it has been playing a dynamic role. If previously it had shared the environmental conditions of the nation and showed "limitations" in its vision of human existence, now it has proved what AJM Smith said that "challenge creates its response". Precisely, the Canadian imagination operates in two directions simultaneously – "moving in harness" –looking outward all around and seeing inside in – measuring the existential reality at all the planes, holding "the still center" firmly. In other words, what it seems to be lacking in height, it makes up in depth. Hence, the Canadian literature, especially poetry affirms that it has a distinctively national identity and is not to use Thom Gunn's expression, "the dull thunder of approximate words."

However, it is an astonishing fact that the factors that shape the Canadian consciousness–wilderness, domestic security, and national identity – are an integral part of the female psyche – partly they inherit it from their natural environment, partly from their existential conditions and partly from their own peculiar 'selfhood'. Therefore, when the women poets reveal "the capacity to 'sing' with social content and criticism" to use Munro Beatie's words, they still confirm that they have "a different way of feeling" – a comment which W.E. Collin made about Dorothy Levesay. Let us survey briefly where lies the difference in their "way of feeling" and how they project it in their poetry.

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The central problem in poetry is always the problem of reality, less on the social and more on the psycho-spirtual plane. The existential conditions impinge intensely on the female psyche. The acceptance or rejection, denial or disapproval at the emotional level whether in love or death creates in her "the inner storm", "a mutiny within", and she makes up "with a sob, remembering the distant crying" – as McLaren said in "South Flight". Elizabeth Smart in "Rose Died" shows how the inexplicable pain – "the godly law" works on the female psyche. She says :

With its smile-protected face,
My survival bent person
is hurtled on by its nasty lucky genes,
its selfish reason,
and greets the unstoppable blossom
above my rotting daughter
but forever and ever within
is bleading, bleeding.[2]

The despair experienced at a moment is carried on to the next; the betrayal met once shocks even the next generation–as if the whole race exists in a continuity irrespective of the time and place. Not only gods or their chosen creatures of the society, but even time seems unkind to them, as their existence is known less for their virtues and more in terms of years:

When you are thirty
that tomtom, time
begins to beat
to beat for you.

And the brief account of their "ceremonial" existence is :

here did I live
was born and reared
here died

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("The Artefacts : West Coast" by Dorothy Livesay. *PCW* p. 56–57)

The brevity of their 'existence' forces them to search more intensely for their 'selfhood'. Their initial effort in the direction is to free themselves from the network of their immediate commitments—earthly duties—pleasant or unpleasant as Livesay's "The Three Emilys" – Emily Bronte, Emily Dickinson and Emily Carr – presents :

These women crying in my head
Walk alone, uncomforted;
The Emilys, these three
Cry to be set free –
And others whom I will not name
Each different, each the same.

(*PCW* p. 52)

The poet also feels to be "one of these", but with a difference again as

I am the one
Uncomforted.

(*PCW* p. 53)

To liberate themselves to be creative she must restrain her body impulses, must deny man and motherhood as Elizabeth Smart says in "The Muse : His and Hers"

Stevie, the Emilys
Mrs Woolf
By passed the womb
And kept the Self,
. . . . . .
Useful in the dark
Inarticulacy
But drop it like poison now
If you want poetry

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(*PCW* p. 72–73).

The newly realized thoughts make her self-critical as margaret Atwood says in – "The Woman Who could not Live with her Faulty Heart" :

But most hearts say, I want, I want,
I want, I want. My Heart
is more duplicitious,
though no twin as I once thought.
It says, I want, I don't want, I
Want, and then a pause.
It forces me to listen.

(*PCW* p. 157)

Self-denial, self-assesssment, self-realization automatically lead to self-surrender, not to any external pressure or to a professed creed but to her own inner self, her soul as Jay Macpherson confesses in "A Lost Soul" :

"You were my soul : in arrogance I banned you.
Now I recant – return, possess me, take my
Hands, bind my eyes, infalliably restore my
Share in perdition."

(*PCW* p. 137).

With this sort of reverse, inner journey from becoming to being "what we really look like/what we are" – to use Libby Scheier's words from "Women", there arises a new woman who wishes to live in earnest as Margaret Atwood puts in "A Sibyl" :

my sibyl (every woman / should have one) has chosen / to live there.[3]

The choice of life-style or sequence of the priorities in each life would be decided by her "necessary sibyl". So each one is free to depart from the usual course of life, as Dorothy Livesay says in "Song for Departure" :

I went from your arms, to shake
The stars from my hair;

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I went to be common again,
To have common care
For the way I walked down a street,
Ran down a stair
I went from your arms, to break
Joy's fearful snare.[4]

The decision "to be common" is based on the rejection of the deceptive modes of existence—to keep away from the entrapments as it might give her a chance to discover herself beyond the self. She says :

"I will rise alone
Self-extending and self-known."

("On Looking into Henry Moore", by Dorothy Livesay.
CP Vol I, p. 227).

Her newly realized self-knowledge makes her more sure of all that she thinks is true and she rejects other "slow ways" of recognizing on the intrinsic realities of life and death—as Livesay says in "I saw my thought" –where she says : "I saw my thoughts a hawk/through heaven fly" – (Anthology, Dorothy Livesay, p. 404). Without these powerful, thought-felt imaginative experiences, she feels depressed as if passing through "clouded days" and "sunless air". The realization of her inner potentialities endow her with still sharper sensibilities and she can now hear "that roar/which lies on the other side of silence" to use Grorge Eliot's words.

This sort of Keatsean delight in "irrepressible imagination" which seems to have "permanently disburdened my flesh" as P. K. Page put it in "After Reading Albino Pheasants" makes her say that "the world is one part matter, nine parts imagination". Consequently, she withdraws into the private world of her mind as in "After Rain" :

"I see already that I lift the blind
Upon a woman's wardrobe of the mind."

(*PCW* p. 81).

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Her metaphors and images vibrating with a new life spirit constitute the body of her poetry and delicately carry her into "Another Space" where she asks :

> Yet, if I dream
> Why in the name of heaven are fixed parts
> Within me set in motion
> Like a poem? (*PCW* p. 82).

Her self assigned task which is two-fold as Elizebeth Smart points out :

> "it was my job to explain the world :
> it was my job to get the words right".
>
> ("Rose Died", *PCW* p. 75)

demands new poetics, which are more "metaphysical" rather than "romantic". New patterns of meanings emerge out of the polarities of dread and delight, anxieties and aspirations, which sit in "my absolute center". Under here perfect control 'memory' and 'imagination' support the structure her emotions and thoughts as in Margaret Atwood's "This is a Photograph of Me."

> The photograph was taken
> the day after I drowned.
>
> I am in the lake, in the center
> of the picture, just under the surface.
>
> It is difficult to say where
> precisely, or to say
> how large or small I am;
> The effect of water
> on light is a distortion
> but if you look long enough
> eventually
> You will be able to see me.

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(*CP* Vol. II, p. *187)*

She is sure of her 'being' after her symbolic death; she is sure of her meaningful existence despite all sorts of denials/distortions as Atwood emphatically stated in her introductory poem to *The Journal of Susanna Moadie* – "Disembarking at Quebeck" :

> The moving water will not show me
> my reflection
> The rocks ignore
> I am a word
> In a foreign language.[5]

The nullity may be imposed on her but she exists. This disillusioned affirmation of her identity gives her the strength to escape or even transcend 'herself' and identify herself with the world outside – be it a landscape, an experience or a person. In the persona of a poet or an artist, she chooses to "Make a Cosmos of miscellany" – as Jay Macpherson says in "The Third Eye" – the eye of fading love.

For the woman poets, poetry is not a literary signpost but is a powerful medium to highlight not only regional or cosmopolitan but also universal issues. They are not conventional voices – the hater of city or society; the worshipper of nature; or the advocates of any set ideology of Marx or Freud. They are not dreamers of dreams or propagators of a simple life or high ideals. They are concerned with more complex "problems of reality" – at the wider level of individual and society, or man and morality, or man and divinity. Their capacity to identify themselves with the cause makes them achieve at sounding success in their poetic experiments.

Among various themes that stir deeply the female imagination it is "the power politics of sexual relationship" to use Rosemary Sullivan's phrase. For example, take Margaret Atwood's poem "Torture" where she presents "the sadistic phenomenon of political repression and its violence" through an image of a female face carved to a "mute symbol". Briefly, the theme of exploitation has

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been worked through the symbol of the most seriously exploited living creature, i. e. woman. Ironically, the agony of what is shown tends to be deeper than what is overtly stated :

> Just this : I think of the woman
> They did not kill,
> Instead they sewed her face
> shut, closed her mouth
> to a hole the size of a straw,
> and put her back on the streets,
> a mute symbol.
>
> It does not matter where
> this was done or why or whether
> by one side or the other;

(*PE* p. 1129)

Through "a sense of mythic and historical unity with mankind" she conveys the human situation compassionately. These woman poets have more serious task to execute than the feminism in the political sense of the term does. The earnestness and urgency of their mission makes it clear that they have risen above the inhibitions or 'dicholomies' of all kinds and treat man and woman as "one unit" – struggling humanity – and their predicament remains the same. In "Dark Pines Under Water" Gwendolyn MacEven re-defines her goal:

> Explorer, you tell yourself this is not what you came for
> Although it is good here, and green ;
> You had meant to move with a kind of largeness,
> You had planned a heavy grace, an anguished dream;

(*PCW* p. 163)

Travelling on the borderline between past and present cultures, MacEven creates new meanings through the drama of 'intellect' and passional preferences ; for example in "A Breakfast for Barbarions" :

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Let us make an anthology for recipes
Let us edit for breakfast
Our most unspeakable appetities –
Let us pool spoons, knives
and all cutlery in a cosmic cuisine
let us answer hunger
with boiled chimera
and apocalyptic tea,
an arcane salad of spiced bibles
tossed dictionaries.

(*PCW* p. 162).

These lines – a call to "O my insatiates" reveal her particular emotional and intellectual temperament – which seems to be lacking refinement but do affirm what MacEven would call "Stigmata of the self's own holiness" which craves for "a brave new world" but refuses to be sentimental in hope or despair.

The poetry of Phyllis Webb is a unique illustration of such serious preoccupations with certain themes like love, parting and suffering on the one hand, and love as poetry on the other but the poet in her is resolute neither to magnify things nor to overstate. She herself acknowledged that her poems are refined down to "bone-essential statements". Her attempt is to create "pearl poem"– "a kind of narrative line with a lyric intension". In "Poetry", published in 1956 collection, she writes : "Fidelity/as in love/is in poetry/an unexpected satisfaction." Her poems are rich in moral intensities, and intense even in doubt as "Nothing finally is final" – as she says in "Flux". To experience a completion in love one must learn a lot:

"Who would call me to still centres
needs a lesson in desire."

Which means "inner freedom from the practical desires". That is the essential point where mankind should instruct itself if it wishes to be "civilized". In *Naked Poems* Webb calls herself to be "an apostle of the Priestess of Motion", of Flux for which 'sea' is a

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perfect symbol. Her poems are hieroglyphic ; the gifts of love are – "perfection with exactitude" and the result is, as she says in the final poem of "Suite II" :

> Poems, naked
> in the sunlight
> on the floor.

She deals with the most personal and the most universal emotion of love in such a way that even the non-personal acquires allusive meaning. It relates the emotion and states of mind to a particular location as in "Suite I" – which begins by making a room – a room of her own to be herself and "room in which to love" :

> It seems
> I welcome you in
> Your mouth blesses me
> all over
> There is room.

John Hulcoop in his article on Phyllis Webb makes a very elucidating remark : "If life has any value, it is to be found in love; if love has any meaning, it resides in its power to inspire the priestess of the eternal imagination to transmute the daily narrative of experience into a radiant body of timeless lyric poems".[6]

These insights into reality of love add another dimension to the poetry of Margaret Avison who handles the perplexities of faith and doubt in a language which, as George Woodcock remarks, is "the subterranean Lingua franca of mysticism with a very tenacious personal voice." (*CP* Vol. I, p. 29)

Like the seventeenth century metaphysical poets, she plays on the peradox for which she depends on her "knotted and condensed style", which makes heavy demands on her readers also if at all they wish to share her "vision" or "fancy" as shown in "The Apex Animal". George Bowering observer in his article "Avison's Imitation of Christ the Artist" (*Can. Lit.*, Autumn 1972)

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that many of her poems and prose pieces acknowledge "her relationship with Christ and its effect upon her work."[7] That is why her favourite word or combining word is "all", as in "altoday" of "allgathering", or as it is suggested in such a word as "shorelessness". She holds a similar view of time. Her collection *The Dumb Founding* (1966) is a highly conscious response to various figures of Christ. For example take "Searching and Sounding" :

> in the sour air
> of a morning–after rooming–house hall–bedroom;
> not in Giethsemane's grass, perfumed with prayer,
> but here
> seeking to cool the gray–stubbled cheek
> and the filth choked throat
> and the sealding self–loathing heart . . . (*TD* p. 60–62)

"That poem is, among other things, Avison's greatest statement about the artist and his making of art", as George Bowering assessed. Her ingenious use of diction and syntax as in the lines :

> failing, for he is
> sick
> for I . . .

an awareness of 'I' is important, it can be as elusive as the man in "The Mirrored Man".

> So now we flee the Garden
> Of Eden, steadfastly.
> And still in our flight are ardent.
> For last eternity. (*CP* Vol. I, p. 269)

It is our making in time, "till time be full", as seen from eternity, that the reader can understand the meaning of "steadfastly". Which means standing still. Avison's total poetic output reveals

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her searching and sounding as an artist imitating Christ or God who is the greatest creator.

Thus, women poets from Canada are too many and too prolific. They identify themselves by the sheer stretch of their imagination and deep aesthetic occupation on the one hand with a cave man of the stone age and on the other with Christ. They have full faith in their visionary qualities and show a superb self confidence in handling the language and matter.

The sureness of details and controlled tone of voice confirm that theirs is a poetry of things they want and in a language of 'wanting', or ambition. Their personal imagination makes them 'capture' "my own sunlight". Even their characteristic excesses are their own and are an integral part of their poetic world which is "a Cosmos of miscellany".

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ANIRUDH P. TRIVEDI

FROM SURVIVAL TO SELF–ACTUALISATION : THE NATIVE VOICE AND CREATIVE INTENTION IN MARIA CAMPBELL'S *HALFBREED*

The title of the book itself poses the problem. Here we meet a native Canadian woman writer, poignantly aware of her painful predicament. The book presents a daring account of a strong-willed woman who fought for her people and never surrendered. In one of the book reviews of *Halfbreed* the following words occurring enable us to uncover the force of will by which the author has to live and seek fulfilment through creative expression :

> The cover is haunting – a strong, dark face half cast in shadows. The title, *Halfbreed*, is proud–an arrogant acceptance of the epithet by which her people are called. The text is spirited – a resolute testimony to Maria Campbell's faith in her race and herself.[1]

Halfbreed presents, boldly and honestly, vivid descriptions of Campbell's poverty stricken years when she began to ponder over the insidious cancer of racism, sexism, alcoholism, prostitution and many other forms of social abuse in Canadian society – a society which determines itself to be patriarchal, white and Eurocentric. A testy feminist undercurrent runs through out the narrative which tells us of the native men and women, ruthlessly discriminated against and unbearably hurt. The emotions range from anger and irony, passing pessimism, grave and grim reflections to affirmation and hope.

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Initially conceived as a history of the Metis (denoting a mixed cultural heritage of the Native and French Canadian) struggle, the book finally got shaped into an autobiography. Campbell preferred this format deliberately for the purpose of introspection and self-fashioning, as perhaps she viewed the creation of autobiographical character essentially an act of cultural identification and a means of shaping views with a sense of authority and authenticity. We all know that biography is "not only a special kind of literature but also an instrument of knowledge" in which "the spirit brooding over the recollected material is the truest and most real element."[2] Here we see the act of recollection becoming simultaneously an act of creation and an act of self-evaluation.

Halfbreed is then a book of memories. These memories, all relating to the people and places Campbell knew intimately, are presented and narrated dramatically in autobiography and history, providing perspectives for various processes of self education which would eventually prepare the author for a crucial creative role in order to reintegrate herself into her own community and cultural heritage. Making her intention clear in the very beginning of the book, she says : "I write this for all of you, to tell you about the joys and sorrows, the oppressing poverty, the frustrations and the dreams."[3]

Campbell had lived with pain and failure for a long time before her anger and courage led her to examine her life and present her personal identity into the language of her own culture, subjecting at the same time her private self to public evaluation. And she wanted the value of her voice to be recognized by the reading public at large which consisted of both the Natives and Euro-Canadians. Native women writers want to share their stories with a wider world. They have been called as "culture brokers, wishing to inform the white world through accurate accounts of Indian ways."[4] Though Halfbreed was written, by the author's own admission, out of "frustration and a lot of anger,"she felt the necessity of having a deeper sense of community of feeling and

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experience with her audience. Moreover, one of Maria's close friends asked her to "make it a happy book" (p. 13). Therefore, trying to overcome her anger, the enemy within, she wrote :

> I am not bitter. I have passed that stage. I only want to say : This is what it was like ; this is what it is still like. I know that poverty is not ours alone. Your people have it too, but in those earlier days you at least had dreams, you had a tomorrow. My parents and I never shared any aspirations for a future (p. 13).

In these words we hear the true native voice, seeking spiritual affinity with all in her struggle for human fights. The readers are invited to participate in the narrative as if in an act of understanding of what has been done to the Halfbreeds, and who are responsible, and what is the meaning of struggle for survival, and what are the effects of the loss of the values of head and heart. While writing her story, Campbell is intensely aware of her inner needs, the need to establish communion with her community. She expressed her belief that writing provides an opportunity for introspection and intimacy that leads to greater understanding. Expressing her views in an interview, she said :

> Well, I tried being the militant speaker and the activist. But once when I was speaking to a fairly large group of people and really putting my soul into what I was trying to tell them. I found as I was watching people, something happened to me. I was entertaining them. . . . That's when I realized that . . . writing was the best way to reach people, because writing is a really personal thing between me and the reader.[5]

Writers who are interested in self-discovery or self-portrayal must adopt some consistent, overriding view of themselves and their past. They must, first of all, identify the "I" which unites all the past experiences in the larger quest for cultural identity. Maria Campbell knows her people well. And she also knows that she is one of them, inextricably bound up with their destiny. They are "halfbreeds" or "half people," (awp – pee – tow – koosons), ironically suggesting their "half status." They are caught between

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two worlds." Historically, the term, "halfbreed" is used to refer to any kind of racial mixture. But to the non-native people, the person who is "caught between two worlds" is "illegitimate to both," being "halfblood."[6] In economic terms, they were known as "Road Allowance People," people who became squatters on their land and were eventually run off by the new owners and they were forced literally to live on the sides of roads. Campbell writes how her people came to be as they are :

> So began a miserable life of poverty which held no hopes for the future. That genereation of my people was completely beaten. Their fathers had failed during the Rebellion to make a dream come true ; they failed as farmers ; now there was nothing left. Their way of life was a part of Canada's past and they saw no place in the world around them, for they believed they had nothing to offer. They felt shame, and with shame the loss of pride and the strength to live each day. I hurt inside when I think of those people. You sometimes see that generation today : the crippled, bent old-grand fathers and grandmothers on town and city skid rows; you find them in the bush waiting to die ; or baby-sitting grandchildren while the parents are drunk. And there are some who even after a hundred years continue to struggle for equality and justice for their people. The road for them is never-ending and full of frustrations and heart-break (p. 13).

Maria feels hurt because in her childhood she saw glimpses of a proud and happy people. She heard their laughter, saw them dance and felt their love. But she can't find it now. By using all the negative connotations of the words like "halfbreed" or "half people," she tries to interpret the crisis of survival. She, in fact, attempts to translate her life in this kind of language and create for herself symbolic identity. These words focus our attention on stinging self-revelations, and thereby on an element of compassion, compassion which the writer is willing to share with any one who might need it. That is the way to guarantee life to the self and its continuity.

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In *Halfbreed* growing up is presented within a large socio-political frame work. The realignment of the self is not limited merely to the immediate family and interpersonal relationships but to the pressing social and political issues, specially against the back drop of racial tension. A host of characters emanate from the author's childhood traumas and memories who contribute to the growth of her political views. But the most important is Maria's great grandmother whom she called "Cheechum." Cheechum is the most political and oppositional character in this book. She told the young girl stories of the Rebellion and of the Halfbreed people, which became crucial to the nascent self. Cheechum taught her all she knew about living and created capacity for self-scrutiny and inward perceptions. Maria describes the effects of her Cheechum's teachings :

> Cheechum and I spent the whole day talking. I told her how desperately I wanted to finish school and take everyone away; how I longed for something different for us ; how I didn't want to be like our women who had nothing but kids, black eyes and never enough of anything ; that I didn't want my brothers to be like the men around us, who just lived each day with nothing to look forward to except the weekend drunks. She didn't say very much, only smiled and said, "Now I know that you belong to me . Don't let anyone tell you that anything is impossible, because if you believe honestly in your heart that there's something better for you, then it will all come true. Go out there and find what you want and take it, but always remember who you are and why you want it" (p. 86).

And Maria knows fully well who she is and what she wants. She is a Canadian Halfbreed and one day she would become the fire of the time. Here Cheechum never accepted defeat, nor sought shelter in the mysterious enclosures of religion. She would not like to become a Christian, saying firmly that "if there was such a thing as hell, then she had lived there, nothing after death could be worse" (p.15). She, therefore, turned to "the little people" for inspiration and spiritual contemplation. Her philosophy was much practical,

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soothing and exciting. She taught Maria to see beauty in all things around her. Inside each thing a spirit lived that was vital and one should not worry about the devil or where God lived. Heaven and hell were only man made and here on earth (p. 72).

Recalling her school days, Maria tells us how once she felt terribly hurt and ashamed when the white kids teased her, calling her one of the "Road Allowance people" who ate gophers instead of cakes, apples and oranges which the white children enjoyed. For this Maria began to hate even her own parents, calling them "no good Halfbreeds" as they couldn't give her nice colthes and good food. This incident infuriated Cheechum so much that she beat the girl and warned her never to fight her parents again for such things. She reminded her that "the white man saw that (hate) was a more powerful weapon with which to beat the Halfbreeds. Already they are making it on you. They try to make you hate your people" (p. 47). In these words Maria found her "first lesson."

Maria's grandmother, thus, emerges as the most pervasive force behind the narrative. Her presence in the text appears as a "calling," prompting intensified self-awareness in the narrator. She has been suggested that Campbell's text "weaves itself about the warp of Cheechum's words, a communal text and one designed to create community." In this context it is interesting to note that most of the native women's narratives are "empowered by the grandmother" who is a "wise story-teller and enabler of life and creativity."[7]

The problems of identity and selfhood can be viewed in *Halfbreed* more clearly in the context of racism and sexism, the two social paradigms of the native existence. In the dominant white Canadian society colour is a major marker as opposed to ethno-cultural diversity. Colour conveys many pejorative connotations. Being white in colour implies being attractive, both physically and culturally, intelligent, virtuous, respectable and, above all, worthy of love. Being non-white, on the other hand, is seen as a negative sign, a symbol of ugliness, sordidness, irrational behaviour, violent sexuality and so on. This aspect of "self-identification by race is

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an important piece of contextual knowledge for understanding the work of the non-white writers" in Canada.[8]

Since white colour is the main criterion for survival, success and happiness, a native Canadian woman finds herself helplessly handicapped in many ways. We see in *Halfbreed* how colour consciousness constantly results in a break down of traditional values such as self-respect, dignity and pride in one's own race and community. The title, *Halfbreed* itself is colour-coded. Remembering her childhood days, Maria tells us how her imagination was stirred by the beauty of Cleopatra. When her brothers and sisters organized a Shakespearian play, she wanted to be Cleopatra, but her brother Jamie said : "Maria, you're too black and your hair is like a nigger's." Many of her white neighbours saw them performing the play and laughed, saying, "Caesar, Rome, and Cleopatra among Halfbreeds" (p. 18). So, Maria can't play Cleopatra because she has dark skin. It is not surprising that the native children would like to associate beauty with the physical characteristics of the English. Judged by the whiteman's standard of life, behaviour and beauty, they see their own colour and physiognomy as humiliating. To be respectful or worthy of love, one has to be beautiful and to be beautiful one has to be white in colour. The writer realized later how such codes of social and psychological praxis as laid down by the white culture were forcibly thrust upon the non-whites, resulting in the loss of self-worth and cultural identity.

The white Canadian culture also implies the non-whites or the natives being mentally inferior. Campbell draws our attention to the cultural symbol systems which constantly colonize the native mind, demonstrating that only "white is right." When in a mixed school for whites and halfbreeds, parents bring their children for registration, Alex Vandal, the village joker tells Maria's father that he is going "to act as retarded because the whites thought we were anyway . . . ." When the teacher asks for the first name of Vandal's son, he replies, "Boy". And then looking dumbly around he yells at his wife in French and Cree, "Oh, the name is Paul." The teacher

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asks again : "Does Paul know ABC?" "No". "Don't you believe in Jesus?" "I don't know. I never saw the god." While all the natives looked straight trying not to laugh, the whites started tittering (p. 45).

Then again, halfbreeds are presented as fools in a movie about their northern Rebellion :

> The movie was a comedy and it was awful : the Halfbreeds were made to look like such fools that it left you wondering how they ever organized a rebellion. Gabriel Dumont looked filthy and gross. In one scene his suspenders broke and his pants fell down, and he went galloping away on a scabby horse in his long red underwear. Louis Riel was portrayed as a real lunatic who believed he was god, and his followers were real "three stooges" types (p. 97)

The author describes the movie from her own perspective as a native viewer. The portrayal is deeply ironic and the irony is obviously based on racial difference and disparagement, revealing "a reactive response to the dominant, white society."[9] Campbell strongly feels that being a native Canadian woman writer (non-white and non-European), her thinking and writing must become oppositional to the main stream, the dominant white Canadian culture. That is the sense of commitment with which *Halfbreed* has been written.

The quest for a feminist self-definition in her writing, therefore, motivated an exploration of the native woman's legitimate history and a true account of her tragic past, including her struggle for equality. The main purpose of the native women's literature in Canada has been to project women at the centre of their own historical experience, making them dynamic interpreters of their own lives. Maria Campbell offers *Halfbreed* as a model for other native women, as a justification for her own life story being presented to the world.

Campbell exhibits in *Halfbreed* extreme sensitivity to the inequality of social roles and the cruel discrimination arising out of

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colour differences. A native woman faces the reality of double discrimination, both of the race and sex. Many native women writers use racism and sexism as equally loaded propositions to present the plight of women as both are motivated by similar economic, social and psychological forces. A native woman has to carry an additional burden, that is of her sex. She suffers more because she is non-white as well as a woman. The author of *Halfbreed* is as outspoken about her oppression as a woman as she is critical of prejudices equally from whites and Indians. She recalls how "she arrived, a daughter, much to Dad's disappointment" (p.19). As she grew older, her father always seemed drunk and her mother always pregnant. She remembers how she hated the white men, laughing and drinking, and sometimes dragging a woman away. And her own men instead of fighting the whites, beat their wives.

Maria was only twelve when her mother died. She was forced to quit school at the age of fifteen and got married in a desperate bid to save her brothers and sisters from orphanage. Soon her husband began to drink, lost his job, beat her often and by the time she was sixteen, gave her a baby. When her husband finally deserted her, she lost both money and self-respect. To support herself and her child, she was pulled into the underworld of white urban society. She fell into prostitution and from there into pills and alcoholism and heroin smuggling, thus destroying both her body and mind. Everything went into pieces inside. She tried various exits back to dignity but no escape from the slough she got stuck up. She suffered a nervous breakdown and even tried to commit suicide. However, gradually she began to recover from disgrace and disintegration, and after sometime, with tremendous strength of will, planned to start again and got fully determined to fight and subvert the hegemony of men who deprived women of the completion of themselves.

In an attempt to save her from utter loss of self, she began to understand the pain and horrid experiences of other native women who endured so much ugliness. She saw many mothers watching

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helplessly their own children, missing the warmth of the family "blanket." She saw girls dying from an overdose of drugs ; their plight on the city streets filled her with blinding hatred for the drunken Indian men. It is hard to explaim, she said, "How I hated our men and yet I loved them" (p. 123). It became a life-long "struggle for Campbell to come to grips with her complex feelings of anger not only towards the injustice Indian and Metis people have experienced but also towards her own shame and confusion of being one of them."[10]

When she joined Alcoholics Anonymous, she met other Metis and got involved in the Native movement. At this time, she began to look at herself as critically as she looked at them because she realized that it was the same thing that "drove me, drove them to what they were." She discovered in her Cheechum's words great significance, who had said that I should go out into the world not in "search of fortune, but rather that I go out and discover for myself the need for leadership and change. If our way of life were to improve, I would have to find other people like myself and together try to find an alternative" (p. 143). With this idea of alternative, Maria comes back from the death of the spirit to regain dignity and meaning in her life and faith in her people. Expressing her optimism in the Native movement, she believes that very soon "people will set aside their differences and come together as one. May be not because we love one another but because we need each other to survive" (p. 156). The final paragraph of the book reveals how the writer finally reaches the deeper levels of spiritual awakening and healing faith.

> . . . The years of searching, loneliness and pain are over for me. Cheechum said, "you'll find yourself, and you'll find brothers and sisters." I have brothers and sisters, all over the country. I no longer need my blanket to survive (p. 157).

This is the way the self finds meaning in sisterhood, in the struggle for the values which unite us all.

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M F SALAT

DEHUMANIZATION OF THE MALE : A NOTE ON MARGARET LAURENCE'S FICTION

Re-writing/Re-righting woman in literature has been a major preoccupation with feminist writers to counter/mine the phallocentric perception of woman which, they believe, provides for limited role-models and reduces the feminine principle to a set of cliches and stereotypes. The patriarchal vision, in their view, is essentialist and reductive and hence misogynistic and subversive. The feminist program has therefore been to attempt a re-vision of woman from the gynocentric point of view to contest the arguably insufficient and/or inadequate phallocentric perception and assert and validate the feminist discourse as different from and incompatible with the patriarchal discourse.

Feminist writers thus posit alternative modes of reading/writing woman in literature. However, since the feminist manifesto emerged as a reaction to the unacceptable male ideology and methodology, it often suffers from the not infrequent consequences of a reactionary pro/position : It replicates the same structures it reacts against in its own theory and praxis. The feminist aggression against male vision of woman quite often engendeers correspondingly inadequate perception of the male in feminist writings. If the feminine principle is reduced to a set of cliches and sterotypes in patriarchal discourse, the masculine principle quite often suffers an analogous dehumanization in the feminist mode creating thereby an either/or situation rather than an

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equitable proposition. Feminist reaction in this sense goes beyond being a mere re-vision/revolution and becomes more or less a revenge of the eye for an eye kind. The advocates of feminism can — and do — argue in defence of such a practice by insisting that feminist poetics must be viewed in terms of sexual politics of power wherein all is grist to the mill. However, it ought not to be forgotten that in power politics too there is the option to choose an ideology and a methodology that transcend those used by the opponent. In their endeavour to humanize woman, however, feminist writers often dehumanize the male and thereby duplicate rather than transcend the patriarchal ideology and methodology they react against. "Revolutionary art," says Marcia Holly, a feminist, "is that which roots out the essentials about the human condition rather than perpetuating false ideologies" (Holly 42). It is ironic that the revolutionary art of feminist poetics, in attempting to root out the essentials of the woman condition, perpetuates false ideologies.

A note on Margaret Laurence's fiction in the context of such a preamble can seem unusual since she is not recognized as an immoderate feminist in Canada. And yet, I find that in her Manawaka writings, the male is inferiorized, marginalized and dehumanized. Her feminist bias redeems all her women characters; her men characters, however, are shown as eccentric, neurotic, deranged, evil, weak, pretentious or shady creatures and if redeemed at all it is by way of pity, or worse, contemptuous charity rather than by any other ennobling emotion. The few who do escape Laurence's woman-handling have an airy nothing kind of presence which is more an absence than a recognizable presence. Such an anti-male attitude is most surprising in a writer who writes within a predominantly humanist tradition and who herself advocates a more equitable attitude towards men outside her fiction. As she says, referring to the Women's Lib Movement :

> I'm 90% in agreement with Women's Lib. But I think we have to be careful here . . . for instance, I don't think enough attention has been paid to the problems men have and are going to have increasingly because of the changes taking

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> place in women. Men have to be reeducated with the minimum damage to them. These are our husbands, our sons, our lovers. . . we can't live without them and we can't go to war against them. The change must liberate them as well (qtd. in Atwood 23).

The fiction, however, belies the fact. Then, to ask the question that is repeatedly asked in Laurence's *The Diviners*, what is real?

"With my generation," Laurence says, "the great thing was the whole exploration of personality" (qtd. in New 5). And so, she creates the fictions of her women protagonists' quests for liberty, integration and rejuvenation and gives us Hagars, Rachels, Staceys and Morags — humanized and individuated women. And what about men? "I do care a lot about my male characters," she says, "but I have not consistently tried to show them from the inside, but rather as they are perrceived by women" (Fabre 204). And the way they are "perceived by women" engenders a long line of marginalized, inferiorized, and dehumanized male characters right across her Manawaka fiction beginning with *The Stone Angel* published in 1964 to *The Diviners* published in 1974. 'The Ten Year Sentence' in no way alters the pattern. Laurence, to use Morag Gunn's expression, truly gives 'bejesus' to her male characters.

The women protagonists in Laurence's Manawaka fictions find themselves trapped in an existentialist 'no exit' predicament. Thus, Rachel is trapped into playing out the given role-model of a spinster schoolarm; Stacey is overwhelmed by the pre-menopausal psycho-sexual confusion; Venessa is the caged bird in the house; Hager, caught in the shares of Father Time, lives suspended in the space between the desired and the actual; and Morag is enclosed by the darkness of the Freudian Unconscious. Each of these women praotagonists are quest figures. Their quest is for survival, freedom and self-actualization. The secondary women characters too are trapped questers but they serve as foils to reinforce the quest motifs of the protagonists' narratives and constitute only a part of the more complex treatment of the protagonists' predicaments. Each of the

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five books of the Manawaka cycle depicts the woman protagonist's journey towards individuation and self-renewal. The process invariably leads to a conflict with the legitimized givens and a confrontation with the inherited social or personal history. The psycho-social conflict brings in the gender-oriented sexual politics and the chief objective is to overcome the socializing and/or inferiorizing patriarchal structures.

In contrast to the quest (ion) ing women characters, the male characters are shown as free-moving but their movement is always on the periphery. If they are placed within the female space, they are shown as destabilizing or threatening presence. Thus, Nick Kazlick, Mac, Bram Shipley and Brooke Skelton, the principle male characters in the Manawaka fictions, play this negative role in their relations with Rachel, Stacey, Hagar and Morag respectively. The male characters, like the female, are often presented as quest figures but the quest objectives are seen in a value-bound moral framework heavily in favour of the women questers. A pairing of the character with his quest makes this fact abundantly clear and this is what we get : Nick Kazlick : seduction; Mac : mediocre material success; Bram : Rabbit brained schemes for quick money; Brooke Skelton : pretentious academic achievement; Jules : self-destruction. The women characters' quests are posited as heroic, spiritual and hence of a higher order; the male's, on the other hand, are depicted as unheroic, materialistic and hence of an inferior order. Even if one accepts Laurence's admission that "there are some things that a male writer cannot *know* about a woman, and this is true about a woman writing about a male character" (Sullivan 74) , how can one condone such a running down of male motives and actions? It is ironic that the patriarchal misogynistic structures that Laurence attempts to reject and react against are replicated and emerge as anti-male positions in her fiction. Is an androgynous vision an impossibility? If this is so, surely it is a very disheartening proposition.

Such an anxiety might appear partisan, coming as it does from a male critic. That such an anxiety is felt even amongst feminists

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can be seen from what Mary Anne Dolan, an American professional woman and a feminist says : "The question to me is not whether women can be as ruthless as men; we all know the answer to that. But is it so unreasonable to expect, as we did during the height of the Women's Movement, that women can be humanizers?" (Dolan 20). The issue at stake is not who is dehumanizing whom, but why it is being done at all.

A normal, stable male–female relationship in any form seems an unachievable goal for Laurence. Women, in her fiction, as a mother, daughter, wife of lover invariably has a conflictual relationship with the male counterpart viz. son, father, husband or lover. Although the relational tensions and conflicts are legitimized in plausible human terms, they are so skillfully worked out that as against the women characters who invariably get the benefit of doubt, the male characters are put in a compromising and defenceless position. Take Hager Shipley, for instance. In her long journey across time and space, she is instrumental in causing much unhappiness and misery to all her men — father, brother, husband, sons. And yet, it is Hagar who emerges as heroic — almost, even, as a tragic—figure in the novel whereas her 'lost men' are diminished by her heroic/tragic stature. "I really think," Laurence said in an interview, "with my main male characters in all my writing I do feel a great sympathy" (Sullivan 74). Sympathy they do deserve for being dwarfed and diminished by the heroic Laurentian women. In fact, Hagar Shipley's (insincere) lament 'O my lost men' can veritably serve as an epitaph for the tombstones of all the men lost in Laurence's oppressive woman's world.

It is interesting to note that even when Laurence appears to admire or aggrandize a male characher, she always manages to puncture the illusion at the end of it all. Venessa's father, Doc Macleod seemed a good enough person till in the story "A Bird in the House" we discover the skeleton hidden in his cupboard : the 'evil' man had betrayed and abandoned a young innocement French girl—just like Nick Kazlik. Similarly, Grandpa Connors, who seemed such an admirable bear of a man is eventually discovered

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to be actually a squeaking mouse. This pulling–the–rug–from–under–the–feet act is repeatedly seen in Laurence's fiction. Piper Gunn, Colin Gunn, Brooke Skelton, Thor Thorlakson, Buckler— all of these male characters, to cite a few are given the same puncturing–the bubble treatment. It appears to follow that Laurence, a woman, can have an unqualified admiration only for women. Can we—should we? — take this to typify the way woman perceives man? Should sexual politics reduce textual poetics to puerile games of you hit me — I hit you kind? At stake in such a position is not merely the question of inferiorizing and dehumanizing of the male but the larger question of whether feminist writing is revolutionary art or reactionary hysteria.

Manawaka, in Laurence's fiction, more than a physical, actual, geographical entity, is a state of mind. That is why, all her women protagonists return to Manawaka after having left it, either actually, physically like Hagar or mentally like Morag. This return to Manawaka, Laurence believes, is a Canadian experience (Krotetsch 47). The return is, as she says to Kroetsch, "a coming to some kind of terms with your roots and your ancestors and, if you like, your gods" (Kroetsch 47). However, it is interesting to note that although the women characters are shown partakiing in this typically 'Canadian' experience, the male characters have no place in the metaphysical abstract of the typical Canadian consciousness. The women characters' struggle is seen in terms of a spiritual journey towards self-renewal, the men move about aimlessly and remain rooted to their marginality. Nick Kazlik seduces Rachel, rejects his parents and disappears probably never to return; Hagar's son John returns to Manawaka but only because temporarily he has nowhere to go to and is planning to leave for ever when he dies ; Jules never comes to terms with his roots ; Thor Thorlakson does not even acknowledge his Manawaka origins ; Manawaka inhabits only the women, not the men. It replicates and contrasts unfavourably with the spiritual (and hence superior) pursuits of her heroines.

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How total is the dehumanization of the male in Laurence's fiction can be seen by comparing the secondary women characters with the secondary male characters. Whereas the former (Eva Winkler, Julie Kazlik, Arlene Simmons, just to cite a few) are delineated as recognizable human beings with flesh and blood, the latter (Luke, Jack Fogler, Telford Simmons, Steven, etc.) are two dimensional caricature figures. They have names but no real substance. This is in a sense, a literal dehumanization of the male. Seen in the larger perspective of the dehumanization of the male obtaining in Laurence's fiction, this methodology strikes one more as an act of will than an artistic inevitability.

The insufficiency or inadequacy of the male perception of woman cannot—does not—validate or justify a similar mis-representation of the male in woman's writing. One wrong cannot be righted by another. That would entail a perpetuation of false ideologies rather than a resolution of contraries leading to an androgynous vision. As Toril Moi says : "All forms of radical thought inevitably remain mortgaged to the very historical categories they seek to transcend. But our understanding of this historically necessary paradox should not lead us complacently to perpetuate patriarchal practices" (Moi 88).

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NARAYAN SHARMAH

ALFRED PURDY AND HIS POETRY OF POLARITY

The growth of Canadian English literature has been slow. The social and economic conditions that are congenial to the writing of literature were entirely lacking. Most of the inhabitants were settlers and immigrants to a strange land and climatically a hostile country. All the energy and resources and attention of these pioneers was occupied by the fundamental problem of surviving.

Canadian literature cannot be said to have come into prominence and to have prospered until after the year 1867. Coincident with the federation of the provinces appeared a group of writers that were to create an important body of literature that was not only endowed with high literary worth but also bore a distinct Natural identity on it. The names of Archibald Lampman, Duncan Campbell Scott, Bliss Carman, Charles G. D. Roberts and William Wilfred Campbell are worthy to be mentioned in this regard.

The writers of this group were the first to transcend the bonds of imitation and to leave mediocrity behind them, yet they all had a romantic vein pulsating in them. In many cases, their styles, images and rhythms remind one of Spenser, Keats, Pope, Byron and Wordsworth. Although Canadian English prose also developed rapidly yet it has not formed so significant a part of the Canadian literature as poetry. Because of the sparsely populated country and a nation preoccupied with earning a living, writers of essays, fiction and drama have no national outlet for their talents

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There are only a few journals and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation affording outlets for such works. Though the public for poetry has been even smaller than that for other forms of literature, yet because poetry does not depend so much on an urban society as the essay and the drama, it has continued to be written in a relatively large volume.

The publication of E.J. Pratt's "The Catchalot" in *The Canadian Forum* in 1925 marks the onset of a revolution in the Canadian verse. Breaking with a tradition that was rigidly romantic in form and content, Pratt extended the pattern and the scope of poetry in theme, imagery and diction. Though Pratt imparted a truly modern image to Canadian verse and a distinct national style and imagery to it, yet the growth and development of Canadian poetry has not been in a simple and direct manner. Actually C.J. Vincent has identified two main lines on which Canadian poetry has developed. Writing in "The Encyclopedia of Literature", he says :

> Contemporary verse has developed along two main lines. There is the verse of social consciousness in which the poet is trying to make some adjustment to difficult political and economic conditions. To this group belong Dorothy Linesay, A.M. Kline and Anne Marriott. . . . Then there is the verse that seems to derive its inspiration partly from the 17th C. metaphysicals and partly from Pound, Eliot, and the later Yeats. Generally speaking, this verse is cryptic and difficult in its rebellion against the subject matter and form of the immediate past. But it has variety, with its subjects drawn not only from the contemporary social world but also from the mental and emotional life of the individual.[1]

I must, however, point out that this rebellion against the style and the subject matters of the past has not been an excercise in egoistic aggrandizement. It has actually been compelled, subconsciously and imperceptibly perhaps, by the Irresistible Pressures of the Spirit of the Age. Such rejections and such quests were being undertaken all around everywhere, especially by the

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European and American writers. The loss of faith, the failure of the conventional ideals and the bleakness of the future that haunted the writers after the first world-war and even for the three following decades has been best described by Ralph Gustafson in the following words :

> Despair is universal over the question of who everyone is. It is necessary to know. We have got ourselves into a position where perhaps this is possible. Disillusion is irreducible ; the inherited past is totally questioned. Now something is happening. So radically have protests been lodged that the negations are proving no longer sufficient. We are in the midst, or at the beginning of the re-creation. The dialogue of the new Canadian poets is of the greatest interest. The burden is testamentary. . . . By those who want disillumined affirmation, these fresh sensibilities are not to be ignored.[2]

Amongst these new crusaders struggling for this disillusioned affirmation and fresh poetic sensibilities, Alfred Purdy's is one of the most important names. Paying tribute to Purdy's achievement, Peter Stevens writes :

> . . . Purdy has hammered out for himself his own poetic method, intensely personal and yet also Canadian in its remarkable melding of disparate elements. It is almost as if Purdy wants to find an entirely new beginning for poetry to express the emergence of a new nation.[3]

Alfred Purdy has instilled the true Canadian spirit into his poetry. One strange and yet quite real characteristic of the typical Canadian psyche is an overpowering tendency to reach the middle course by examining both the opposite sides of an issue to achieve a balance in the tension of polarities. In fact two important critics see this tension of opposites as the main and persistent quality of Canadian literature. In this regard, W.H. New writes that a tension exists between an Eastern and Western attitude in Canada. This split without being limited to a purely geographical concept, explains the struggle for a viable literature in both form and content

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in the twentieth century Canadian literature.[4] Eli Mandel also sees many contrary elements operating in the life and literature in Canada. He writes :

> We may put it that the tension in Canadian life is between vulgarity and gentility. Or we may choose other pairs : American as opposed to British influences on Canadian writing ; colonialism as opposed to nationalism ; social realism as contrasted with abstract design ; originality as opposed to traditionalism.[5]

Alfred Purdy's poetry is truly representative of this tension of polarities so characteristic of Canadian psychology. The tension and the opposition between the past and the present is expressed and is sought to be resolved through a juxtaposition and telescoping of chronological time as in the following lines :

> Alexander turns from the gates of the Ganges
> and moves with his generals and phalanx to bulldoze the Kremlin
> while the eunuch priests conspire in Assyria
> to defoliate the Vietnamese rice fields of bananas.

In these lines the limits of the past and the present and the compartmentalization of the chronological time has been sought to be overcome by a contemporarization of Alexander's Indian campaign, the present day Russian situation, the Assyrian conspiracies and the recent Vietnamese holocaust. However absurd or however feeble this poetic device may be, it is yet an unmistakable attempt ot transcend the limitations of Time and to leap into the durability and the contemporaneity and the freedom of the Eternal Now Consciousness.

Another strange polarity in Purdy's poetry is the conflict between the requirements of romanticism and the desire to guard against and to present romantic elements from overshadowing his work. With this purpose he repeatedly fills his verse with realism

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in flat prosaic tones or in self-ridicule. This is quite well illustrated in his poem "The Cariboo Horses."

The vastness of the Canadian scene invites one to travel ceaselessly. Purdy's poems are characteristic of both the attraction for travel and the fear of it as well. In the context of travel, Purdy is confronted with the limits and the boundaries of space and travel which enables him to exceed the boundaries of his immediate local limits and to experience a sense of Spacelessness through a movement through space. This enables him to lift his consciousness up from the real and the local to the cosmic and the universal.

Another striking polarity in Purdy's poetry is the overawing and stunning contrast between the Vastness and the Infinity of the Cosmic Forces symbolized by limitlessness of Space and Time and the helplessness, weakness and the littleness of Man in dealing with them.

This contrast between the polarity of the Insurmountable Cosmic Machinery and the mini and the mortal strength of Man becomes the source of another interesting polarity in Purdy's poetry—the polarity between Permanence and Transitoriness. This contrast has provided us with some of his best poems.

Another distinct polarity in Purdy's poetry is the polarity between Life and Death. He discovers a symbol for this in the miniature Arctic trees, only eighteen inches tall, whose roots are in constant touch with permafrost so that 'they use death to remain alive'. Regarding Death not as an extinction or cessation of being but as a source or spring of Life is the epic courage that Purdy celebrates in his poetry even in this death-devastated twentieth century.

Inspite of such depth of thought and epic solemnity of treatment, Purdy's poetry presents, at times, a delightful polarity and contrast between the serious and the awful and the comic and the humouous. At times the poet himself becomes the butt of his jokes.

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Apart from these contrasts and polarities that are such persistent characteristics of his poetry, Purdy has also written realiistic yet poetically beautiful descriptions of the charms of the vast Canadian land especially of the Northern parts of his country. In his Arctic poems, "North of Summer" (1967) he presents a charming literary portrait of the stern, uncompromising and cold landscape.

The North stands for a new frontier and also becomes the symbol of another polarity in his poetry because most of the settlements and hubs of modern civilization are located along the Southern border of Canada. However, inspite of his sympathy and realism and universal range, Purdy's attitude towards the Eskimos and their lives remains foreign. But it is not Purdy alone who is guilty of this indifference. The Eskimo life has found only a marginal treatment in the works of most of the poets.

In the light of these salient characteristics of his verse, I now proceed to attempt a brief analysis of some of Purdy's poems from the point view of their themes, imagery and diction, etc. His poem "Wilderness Gothic" opens with the following lines :

> Across Roblin Lake, two shores away,
> They are sheathing the church spine
> with new metal. Some one hangs in the sky
> over there from a piece of rope,
> hammering and fitting God's belly scratchet,
> until there is nothing lift to nail on —
> Perhaps the workman's faith reaches beyond :[6]

The sheathing of the churchspine with new metal may be a symbol for revival and refurbishing of the traditional religious faith. The polarity between faith and doubt is brought out though the figure of hammering of nails, until there is nothing left to nail on reminding one of the crucifixion image. Here it is the Faith itself that is being nailed and the cross is the Infinite Space of the sky itself representing God Himself who is the very basis of the Faith and the religious teaching. But the polarity between the loss of Faith and

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its persistence emerges into bold relief when we are told that "Perhaps the workman's faith reaches beyond", that is it remains unshaken in spite of all persuasions and experiences to the contrary.

The polarity between life and death and their cyclic and independent nature is brought out when in the second stanza Purdy writes of the "Fields around yellowing into harvest,. . . and death yodeling quiet in green woodlots with the bodies of three young birds having disappeared in the sub surface of the new country highway. In the third part of the poem, he talks of "gothic ancestors pearing from the sky with dour faces trapped in photograph albums . . . , " presenting a very modern image.

From the grave metaphysics of Faith and God and the wistful appearances of ancientness and ancestors, Purdy suddenly dives to the realism and inevitability and compulsions of the animal in man and he versifies about "work–sodden wives groping inside their flesh/for what keeps moving and changing and flashing beyond and past the long frozen Victorian day." The symbol of 'the long frozen Victorian day' is obviously representative of the prudish and passionless Victorian morality of the preceeding century.

In the next poem "The Sculptors", Purdy in a very down to earth and prosaic manner declares his desire to realise his true self through the use of modern commercial imagery. He doubts even his own reason too and makes a similar allowance for the faults and lapses of others also groping for something, yet not knowing what it is :

Getting itchy excelsior packing
inside my shirt and searching
for one good carving
one piece that says 'I am'[7]

The 'I am' realisation of consciousness is the highest Vedantic Truth and spiritual realization in the Hindu Upanishadic lore. Later on Purdy writes in the same poem :

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and I' m getting tired of this
looking for something
not knowing what it is
But I guess they got tired too . . .

Then he rebukes himself for his doubt and his impatience with the fellow humanity. He writes :

I 'm a little ashamed of myself
for being impatient with them
But there must be something
there must be something . . .[8]

And in the following lines we come across an ideal illustration of his telescoping and juxtaposing past and present events and ignoring the compulsions of chronological time :

And I have a sudden vision
of the carvers themselves
in this broken sculpture
as if the time & the place & me
had clicked into brief alignment
and a switch pulled
so that I can see and feel
what it was like to be them.

The images of this chronological miracle being accomplished through the pulling of a switch and the use of the word 'click' and alignment are from modern science and technology.

In the next poem "Lament for the Dorsets", Purdy unimpressively and unsympathetically versifies about the genocide of the Eskimos in the 14th century but very sharply reminds us of similar destruction being turned back towards the despotism of the twentieth century science. He writes :

Twentieth century people
apartment dwellers

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executives of neon death
war makers with things that explode
—they have never imagined us in their future
how could we imagine them in the past
squatting among the moving glaciers
six hundred years ago
with golwing lamps.[9]

The modern scientific imagery in the poem attracts our attention.

In the poem "The Country North of Balleville" Purdy gives vent to his romantic cravings for an ideal land—a dream country where he may have pleasure and beauty after his own desire and enjoy the same without being disturbed by the views and opinions of others :

Where a man might have some
opinion of what beauty
is and none deny him
for miles—[10]

But he does not allow his romantic impulse to carry him off his feet. He soundly remembers that these romantic dreams cannot have any reality or concrete existence. Such romantic dreams are always shattered on the hard rocks of reality :

Yet this is the country of defeat
where. . . .
pickkicking glaciers have left strewn
with centuries rubble. . . . . .
. . . . . .
. . . . . .
has lost meaning under the meaningless sky
—they are like cities under water.
and the undulating green waves of time
are laid on them —
This is the country of our defeat.[11]

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The image of the 'undulating green waves of time' is too beautiful yet stern and cruel to remain unnoticed. At the end of the poem Purdy strikes us with sharp irony. He rebukes us for forsaking our cultural and social heritage and traditions and mocks at us for groping for vague hankerings in unknown pathways and bylanes of life. He says :

And this is a country where the young leave quickly
unwilling to know what their fathers know
or think the words their mothers do not say —
. . . .
a little adjacent to where the world is
. . .
sometime
we may go back there
to the country of our defeat
. . . . . .
But it's been a long time since
and we must enquire the way
of strangers—[12]

In the poem "Necropsy of Love", Alfred Purdy descends to a naturalistic and Lawrence-like treatment of the sex passion tossing itself about like a mad man's sword. He writes :

No, I do not love you
hate the word,
that private tyranny inside a public sound,
your freedom's yours and not my own :
but hold my separate madness like a sword,
and plunge it in your body all night long.[13]

Later in the poem, he asks to "turn the moonlight off" making use of a scientific modern image taking it from electrical technology. The Freudian symbolism in the poem is quite obvious.

Alfred Purdy's yearning for a truly rational and transcendental religious faith and its actual realization gets most clearly expressed

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in his poem "The Blue City," wherein he lends a poetic garb to one of the highest and most occult concepts of religious experience and also the way to it. The relevant lines are the following :

> It occurs to me that I will remember
> this time for its inbetweenness
> removed from the continuity of things
> and it's as if I'm a long way off
> somewhere else and watching myself. . . .[14]

The use of the expression 'inbetweenness' shows the poet's tendency to and skill in word coinage. But more than that it reveals his familiarity with abstruse concepts of oriental mysticism and its occult practices. In "Kashmir Shaivism", the 'inbetweenness' of two opposing or unstable currents has been described as being identical with the durable and the Unchanging Divine existence.

The "Pratyabhigya Hrdyam" of Kshemaraj has a fundamental aphorism (the 17th aphorism) which is "Madhya Vikasat

> उभयोर्भाव्योर्ज्ञाने ध्यात्वा मध्यं समाश्रयेत् ।
> युगपच्च द्वयं त्यक्त्वा मध्ये तत्वं प्रकाशते ।।

(Dharana 37)

> न चितं निक्षिपेद दुःखे न सुखे वा परिक्षिपेत ।
> भैरवि ज्ञायतां मध्ये किं तत्वमवशिष्येत ।।

(Dharana 78)

Chidananda Labhah" which means that the cultivation and development of the 'inbetween' state lends to the experience of divine Ananda or ecstasy. The "Vigyan Bhairava Tantra" also prescribes a similar and identical path for the attainment of the highest Divine State :

The underlying idea of these aphroisms is that the merging and the stabilizing of one's awareness in the space or interval

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between emerging and subsiding states of consciousness leads to "Tattva Prakash" or the Illumination of Truth and Reality.

And the words ". . . I am a long way off/somewhere else and watching myself" are reminiscent of the cultivation of an attitude of an observer or a witness to one's own actions and experiences for over-coming their binding power, described in the Gita and also elaborated by Shri Aurobindo in his "Essays on the Gita".

The way Purdy stretches and compresses his imagery meeting the demands of religious affirmation, philosophic reflection and also immediacy and objectism freeing himself from the shackles of the tradition prosodic formalities he seems to be a poet in the tradition of the English Metaphysical poetry. In his well-known essay "The Metaphysical Poets", T.S. Eliot, talking of some modern poets writes :

> Our civilization comprehends great variety and complexity, and this variety and complexity, playing upon a refined sensibility, must produce various and complex results. The poet must become more and more comprehensive, more allusive, more indirect, in order to force, to dislocate if necessary, language into his meaning . . . .
>
> Hence we get something which looks very much like the concept — we get, in fact, a method curiously similar to that of the 'metaphysical poets', similar also in its use of obscure words and of simple phrasing.[15]

The poetry of Alfred Purdy is endowed with most of these characteristics. It also betrays an unmistakable awareness on the part of the poet of what T.S. Eliot called "the primacy of the supernatural over the natural life."[16] Lamenting the state of his contemporary literature, Eliot remarked : ". . . there never was a time so completely parochial, so shut off from the past".[17] There are few contemporary poets who are so totally and impersonally open to the past.

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Ours is the age of the "advent of the Pitiless Beast"[18] in which W.B.Yeast finds :

.. ..
the ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.
.. ..
Surely some revelation is at hand;[19]

Purdy's workman in his poem "Wilderness Gothic", "Hanging in the sky over there from a piece of rope" is the metaphor for the whole of humanity, waiting for the expected 'revelation', for the awaited–something to happen.

Prof. I.A. Richards simply observes that we dare not overlook the sustaining powers of poetry, especially in "this iron time." Purdy writes the kind of poetry that can compel such attention to it; thanks to its epic majesty and cosmic scope.

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USHA PATHANIA

SELF–CONCEPT AND INTERPERSONAL INTERACTION IN ANITA DESAI AND MARGARET LAURENCE'S FICTION

. . . the eye sees not itself.
But by reflection, by some other things.
–Shakespeare, *Julius Ceaser* I, ii, 52

Self-concept, an important variable in personality dynamics, has traditionally been assigned an important place in formulations regarding the social nature of the individual and the character of social interaction. On the one hand, self-concept is the product of interaction and is subject to continuous revision according to the exegencies of interaction, on the other, it is a determiner of the cause of interaction. Psychologists, of all ages and schools of thought, believe in the reality of subjective life and the fact that human interaction at every level—from the most intimate to the most superficial—is nothing but an expression of the inner emotional needs of the interacting individuals. Carl Rogers defines human interaction as a way of self-disclosure and argues that, "Man lives essentially in his own personal and subjective world and even his

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objective functioning is the result of subjective purpose and subjective choice"[1]

The centrality of self in social interaction has been discussed and established not only by psychologists, sociologists, phiolsophers and educationists, but by the contemporary novelists also. Anita Desai and Margaret Laurence believe that one's capacity to adapt to new circumstances or dissimilar personalities, and ability to interact warmly with others is closely linked with one's self-image, and the extent to which this self is experienced as worthy of esteem. The protagonists of both Anita and Margaret go through life in a terrifying isolation because they find it hard to reconcile the demands of their psyche with those of the world around them. More specifically they are confronted with the stupendous task of defining their relation to themselves and to their immediate human context. They find it difficult to adjust to diversity when contextual conditions require behavioural responses to fall within a range of acceptable pattern.

Both Anita Desai and Margaret Laurence are fascinated by the psychic lives of their central characters and the fact that human interaction is guided and modulated by internal processes. A close reading of their works reveals that the earliest and the most general aspects of self-concept develop in interaction between the child and the parental figure. Their central characters, by and large, have strange childhood. When their experiences and interactions during this formative period combine with their congenital hypersensitivity they develop a negative self-image. Experience of self as negative and unworthy of love and esteem generates psychic states of fear, guilt, anger, anxiety, helplessness and depression. Their fragmented psyche forces them to view this world as a hostile place: a trap where their individuality is endangered. The unwholesome domestic environment and the peculiar filial bonds—sometimes characterised by pampering and sometimes by emotional deprivation—rob their protagonists of the ability to interact warmly and reduce dissonance in their adult relationships.

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In *Cry, The Peacock*, Anita Desai focuses on the degenerative and crippling effect of an overindulgent parental attention on one's capacity for proper self-evaluation. For Maya's father, loving a child means creating a world of sugar and candy ; flowers and fairies ; moon light and star-studded dreams. All reality is shut out to her. Maya remembers that at her father's place: "The world is like a toy specially made for me, painted in my favourite colours, set moving to my favourite tunes"[2]. Her father's undue concern for her happiness gradually removes Maya away from reality, where the unique and the individual stand in a happy and bewitching contrast with the commonplace and the stereotype. In her adult years Maya becomes painfully aware of this limitation : "Yes, now that I go over it in my mind, my childhood was one in which much was excluded : which grew steadily more restricted, unnatural even, and in which I lived as a toy princess in a toy world" (*C.P.*, p. 89). This overprotective attitude of her father does not let her arrive at a proper self-evaluation and a proper self-image. She is protected as an adorable being, whose whims and fancies are to be taken care of by those who claim to love her. Gautama is, naturally, unhappy over the way she had been brought up. His angry outbursts reveal that he fixes the responsibility for her unreasonable expectations from him on her father :

> Life is a fairy tale to you still. What have you learnt of the realities ? The realities of common human existence, not love and romance, but living and dying and working all that constitutes life for the ordinary man. You won't find it in your picture books. And that was all you were ever shown picture books. What wickedness to raise a child like that.
>
> (*C.P.*, p. 115)

After Maya's marriage with Gautama she enters a different world altogether. The aim of human life for the members in Gautama's household is not an epicurean delight in the pleasures of the senses. They are ontologically secure people with a strong internal locus of control. Here frank and objective evaluation of each other does not mean the snapping of the bond between the

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parents and children. Gautama's mother loves her children no doubt, but she does not expect subjugation from them. They suffer from no inhibitions, no anxieties and express themselves without the fear of being misunderstood. This impresses as well as confuses Maya. Her mother-in-law is neither an idealist, nor a perfectionist, nor a romantic and yet Maya feels "her father paling into insignificance in front of this small statured somewhat sloppy woman, who is endowed with the marvellous capacity of indifference to everything that was not vital, immediate and present" (*C.P.*, p. 162).

An individual's concept of self-worth gets crystallized through regularized and recurrent responses of others. An unabated flow of positive response makes one feel secure, happy and fulfilled. The moment yawning gaps become visible between the cognized self and the ideal self, self-evaluation conflicts are generated. This is what happens in the case of Maya. The natural outcome of this conflict is that the disintegrated, neurotic and fearful Maya loses control over her environment and fails to relate herself meaningfully to Gautama.

In *Voices in the City*, it is interesting to explore the childhood experiences and nature of the primary ties in the case of Nirode, Monisha and Amla. References to Nirode's childhood reveal that the personal prejudices of his parents against each other, their open hostility and contempt, and his father's frank preference for Arun adversely affect his psyche. The novel opens with a comparison between Nirode's failure and Arun's bright success. Arun is leaving for England, for higher studies, whereas Nirode decides to live in "shadows, silence, stillness".[4] His plight reminds one of William James's view of the self-concept of a person, who has made one blunder after another. According to him such "a person is liable to grow all sicklied over with self-distrust and to shrink from trials with which his powers cannot really cope"[5].

No wonder Nirode develops a low self-esteem and finds it difficult to interact with anybody for long. Deprived of self-confidence, he makes failure his creed. As a rootless drifter he

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keeps on changing his goals, one after another. His strong obsession with failure is revealed in his conversation with David : "I want to fail quickly. Then I want to see if I have the spirit to start moving again, towards my next failure. . . fall to the bottom. I want to get there without that meaningless climbing. I want to descend quickly" (*V.C.*, p. 15). Certain unpleasant and undesirable events of his childhood fill Nirode with feelings of self-criticism. After bidding farewell to Arun, Nirode broods over his unfortunate boyhood. Had he been a promising lad, instead of Arun he would have sailed to England for higher studies : "It might have been he, he knew that, had he not, as a child, an emotional and disoraderly schoolboy, fallen from his horse and declared to his father, through tears, that he hated horses, sports, and would never ride again. . . . If Arun had not ridden like a prince, captained the cricket team and won top honours in all examinations" (*V.C.*, p.7.).

After his father's death his mother's obvious delight in the company of Major Chadha also damages his self-esteem. Alienation from his mother results in his alienation from society as well. He drifts from one person to another experiencing, all the while,an emptiness and meaninglessnessin life. This despair turns him careless towards himself : bitter, cruel and rapacious towards others. Professor Bose is aware of this unhappy change in him. He is frightened by the planeness of Nirode's face and thinks : "The boy was clever in those early days of his in Calcutta. . . He had been aggressive then too, but not rapacious and cruel. . . The boy ought to go home. He had a home, the Professor had heard of it, but there had been a rift and Nirode had gone astray. Adrift in the city of Calcutta" (*V.C.*, p. 17).

Nirode's elder sister Monisha's predicament is all the more sad. In her case also, the pernicious home environment robs her of the feelings of positive self-appraisal and proper self-image Originally, in chilodhood, the basic hatred was brought into existence by certain people, but later, it becomes part of her personality structure and objects play a secondary role. Individuals with high self-appraisal and self-esteem are generally more toleran!

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and full of love, understanding and trust. After meeting David, Monisha becomes painfully aware of this deficiency in herself. She discovers an enviable quality of love in David : "And I discover that it is the abscence of it that makes us, brother and sister, such abject rebels, such craven tragedians. In place of this love that suffuses the white face of this waif, we possess a darker, fiercer element—fear. I mean by love only an awake condition of conscience. We fear this and avoid it, and so step backwards from love and allow our hands to drop from her warm flanks, unable to respond because we are frozen with distrust" (*V.C.*, pp. 135–36).

Positive self-esteem is directly associated with accepting other people as they are. People with a positive self-regard view the world as a more congenial place and find their fellow beings more acceptable than people characterised by feelings of self-rejection. Monisha considers the women in Jiban's family as inferior to her. They are preoccupied with cutting vegetables, serving food, brushing small children's hair. She finds them spending their lives like birds in the cages without any trace of aggressiveness or sense of identity. All her efforts, therefore, are directed towards "remaining aloof, apart and enclosed within myself beyond their reach" (*V.C.*, p. 238). She thinks herself to be superior to them because when, after getting tired of their mudane activities during the day, they are sleeping, she creeps up the top most flight of stairs on to the roof to enjoy the splendour of stars and solitude :

> I think that what separates me from this family, heaving and rolling beneath me in its dreams of account books, pensions, examination results . . . relations, marriges, births and property. . . is the fact that not one of them ever sleeps out under the stars at night. They have indoor minds, starless and darkless. (*V.C.*, p. 139)

Like Maya, Monisha also suffers from the conflict between the real and the ideal self. She confronts her real self when she listens to the strolling musicians and fails to understand their song and the emotional response it elicits from other ordinary spectators.

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Consequently, her pride in being different from others turns into the most potent cause of her agony : "Everyone in that afternoon audience seemed intensely capable of responding to passion with passion, to sorrow with sorrow. Monisha alone stood apart, unnaturally cool, too perfectly aloof, too inviolably whole and alone and apart" (*V.C.*, p. 238). She realises that being different has been her undoing: "What a waste ! What a waste it has been, this life enclosed in a locked container merely as an observer and so imperfect, so handicapped an observer at that. . . . unable to understand a single word or gesture each one of which moves my companions nearly to tears" (*V.C.*, p. 238).

In *Where Shall We Go This Summer* ? again, the protagonist, a woman of over forty years, with four children and a successful responsible husband, displays distinct symptoms of a negative self-image. Lack of faith in her own self compels her to question everything and everyone around her. The strange and unusual nature of her childhood environment and interaction obstructs her way to a proper self-evaluation. Her uneasy relationship with her father, who indulged in dubious clandestine activities while parading as a saint at the same time, also contributes towards her developing a low self-esteem. Things are made worse by the fact that even her sister Rekha, who is more talented than her and openly enjoys greater attention from her father, is completely indifferent to Sita. The two sisters do not enjoy a normal, wholesome and relaxed relationship between two siblings where dreams and ideals, fears and anxieties are shared. The mystery about her mother and the provocative information given to her by her brother Jivan make her full of doubt and suspicion. These doubts, misgivings and feelings of inadequacy get neatly stacked in her psyche. Long after everything is over at the island and she lives in Bombay, she feels dissatisfied with the people around her. Like Monisha she fails to accept them as they are. In her self-opinionated manner she thinks that a great majority of people lead lives full of boredom: "They are animals—nothing but appetite and sex. Only food, sex, money matters, Animals".[6] Nobody pleases Sita, nobody comes upto her expectations. She does not get used to anyone. When, after

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marriage, she goes to live with her husband's family she finds them intolerable. Living in their age rotten flates they appear to be leading an inauthentic existence. Their "sub-human placidity, calmness and sluggishness" infuriates her. To make her feel happy, Raman arranges for a flat of their own where they could live all by themselves. But even this arrangement hardly improves the situation as people continue to come and be unacceptable to her. Adaptability or adjustment is alien to her, nor is she willing to make any compromise.

In the fictional world of Margaret Laurence also one finds fearful and anxious protagonists striving hard for achieving harmony and fulfilment in their interaction with others. While reading her novels one feels that the joy of living is possible for those, who not only understand themselves but have some knowledge of their human context also: "How can one person know another ?" Hagar Shipley, the protagonist of *The Stone Angel*, constantly asks. But "How can a person know himself ?" is the deeper question that Margaret Laurence asks by implications. Even the first of these questions is double edged. Hagar is not really known by the people around her, nor can Hagar really know them. Only late in her life, when she sees more clearly her relationship with her sons—the favourite flamboyant John and the solidly middle class Marvin with whom she lives—she comes really to see her true self, and hence to see and know her role in life.

In *The Stone Angel*, while exploring the implications of a grandiose self, Laurence highlights the fact that pride in one's uniqueness and false self-esteem deprives one of gratifying relationships with one's fellow beings. Magnificient self-concept erects unsurmountable barriers between the spouses too. Hagar is pround of being fastidious : "There is no one like me in this world".[7] Like Monisha and Sita she too cannot accept people as they are and finds it difficult to appreciate and accomodate others. She wants to out do everybody by doing something unconventional and unique. To her father's remark, "There is not a decent girl in this town who would go without her family's consent. It is not done".

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"It will be done by me" she said drunk with exhilaration at her daring (*S.A.*, p. 49).

Hagar is the one who imposes her concepts on everybody but betrays no signs of resilience; no desire to open herself to different taste, different ideas and attitudes. When she is fully convinced that she cannot convert Bram to her concept of proper living, she takes her younger son John along with her and goes out to live independently. For years together she stubbornly refuses to communicate in any manner with her husband or her elder son Marwin. Hagar all along thinks of herself as an autonomous self. She is convinced that she can live all alone at the age of ninety also. In Marwin's house she cribbs about the lack of privacy and even in the hospital she wants to have a private or at the most, a semi-private room. However, this could not be arranged and she had to share the room with many other patients. Her experience in that crowded ward of the hospital brings to her the awareness that the human context is absolutely essential for human beings. Nobody can live in a vacuum. Sharing and understanding, tolerance and compromise alone can give one happiness and a sense of fulfilment. When, one day, her son Marwin tells her that she will be moved to a semi-private she feels "a quick sense of loss" as though she had been cast out. She feels the betraying tears. In shame she blinks them away but he's seen and asks : "What is the matter ? You said you could not sleep". "Yes, yes, I know, I've got more used to it, that is all. It was'nt necessary to change" (*S.A.*, p. 280).

Hagar becomes aware not only of the limitations of her own self but also realises, for the first time in her long life, that even other people have some limitations. She feels kindly disposed towards her long life, that even other people have some limitations. She feels kindly disposed towards her daughter-in-law Dorris. "She can't sit here by my bed all night" (*S.A.*, p. 285). Nevertheless, it requires a lot of moral courage to remove the cloak of the grandiose self in one single stroke. Even in the hospital she gets pleasure in humiliating Dorris. When Dorris asks her about her meeting with Mr. Troy, in her characteristic style, Hagar says, "We

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did'nt have a single solitary thing to say to one another". Then she bites her lip, looks away and feels ashamed, but won't take back the words thinking, "What business is it of her any way ?" But an urge to face the truth, to tell the truth everpowers her and she feels a touchiness rising, and ultimately tells Dorris : "I did'nt speak the truth. He sang for me, and it did me good". (*S.A.*, p. 293).

Towards the end the true wisdom dawns on her. She realises that her pride has led her to an emotional wilderness. Sadly she muses that her main aim in life was to enjoy it, but her own concept of proper appearances always came in her way :

> This knowing comes upon me so forcefully, so shatteringly, and with such a bitterness as I have never felt before. I must always, always have wanted that–simply to rejoice. How is it I never, I never could ? . . . Every good joy I might have held in my man or any child of mine or even the plain light of morning, of walking the earth, all were forced to a standstill by some brake of proper appearances–oh, proper to whom ? When did I ever speak the heart's truth. (*S.A.*, p. 292)

This poignant and insightful delineation of Hagar's inner conflicts reminds one of William James's statement that, "To give up pretensions is as blessed a relief as to get them gratified : and where disappointment is incessant and the struggle unending, this is what man will always do"[8]. At long last, a moment comes when Hagar Shipley gathers the courage to throw away all pretensions and faces her real self—proud, fearful and conflict ridden : "Pride was my wilderness, and the demon that led me there was fear. I was alone, never anything else, and never free, for I carried my chains within me and they spread out from me and shackled all I touched" (*S.A.*, p. 292). When her real self—alone anxious and fearful—rises to the surface, her shell of apparent self-sufficiency crumbles down. Despite her best efforts she blurts out :"I'm frightened Marwin, I'm so frightened". She thinks it to be shameful but at the same time she finds that "it is a relief to speak" (*S.A.*, p. 303).

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In *A Jest of God* Rachel Cameron, is locked in the role of a spinster school teacher caring for her aging, ailing and psychologically disintegrated mother. There is a wide discrepancy between what Rachel is in her visible public life, how she deals with and appears to others, and what she really thinks and feels. At the age of thirtyfour, living with her widowed mother, she is almost frantically searching for the meaning of her existence, so that she can make an adequate response to life. Like Anita Desai's Nirode and Monisha, Rachel and Stacey (her sister and the protagonist of *The Fire Dwellers*) are victims of a pernicious home environment and an unwholesome filial interaction. Their parents never thought of camouflaging their temperamental polarities and obvious dislike of each other's whims and habits. Neill Cameron confines himself to his funeral parlour and enjoys the constant company of his bottle. The two daughters are not allowed to enter the parlour and hence are deprived of any interaction with their father. Mrs. Cameron, Rachel's mother is an egocentric hypochondriac bound to her fears and her pills. Her pleasures in life are the small vanities of high heels, fussy blue rinsed curls, and her bridge parties. These and the dependence and servitude of her daughter are all she has, and to them she clings with the help of every ploy that cunning of self-indulgence and a real and desperate need can suggest. Rachel is neurotic and egocentric too. She and her mother are both children, each unwilling and unable to grow up and leave the other free, each battering on the weakness of the other.

As any other victim of a negative self-concept, Rachel is desperately afraid of the fears and fantasies of her own imagination. She is terribly oppressed with one absorbing anguish, "What will become of me?"[9] Everything is intolerably heightened for her and everything is suspect. She is all raw nerve ends with self-doubt springing from every situation. As a child her father's occupation always meant embarrasment and fear. She admits, "All I could think of, then, was the embarrasment of being the daughter of someone with his stock-in-trade" (*J. G.* , p. 13). As an adult she feels unhappy over the lack of money that did not allow her to finish university and forced her to come to Manawaka to support her

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mother. At the present crisis point in her life, when she is groaning under the weight of a negative self-image and nothing but loneliness seems to be her lot, she meets Nick. Her fleeting affair with Nick is not a deep emotional attachment, rather it is a last ditch effort to save herself from the shame of eternal spinsterhood: "Nick doesn't know how I've wanted to lose that reputation, to divest myself of it as though it were an oxen yoke, to burn it to ashes and scatter them to the wind" (*J. G.* , 92).

Individuals with low self-esteem depend on others for a sense of identity, well-being and happiness. Rachel articulates it in very unambiguous terms : "I'm not afraid when I'm with him, but when I'm not with him it seems to return (*J. G.*, p. 162). They do not have the confidence to take control of their life and its complicated affairs. Their tendency to lean heavily on the other person and expect him to solve all their conflicts comes in the way of abiding harmonious relationships. The moment Nick realises that Rachel has become dependent on him for the gratification of all her needs, he withdraws himself: "Not a muscular withdrawl. Something different , something unsuspected" (*J. G.*, p. 148). In a very subtle and discreet manner he articulates the limits of human relationships : "Darling", he says, "I'm not God. I can't solve anything" (*J.G.*, p.148).

In *The Fire Dwellers,* wife and mother, almost forty, Stacey MacAindra is desperately searching for new love. She tries to take the edge off desperation with another gin and tonic. She is sure her husband has found a lover. Her doubts, misgivings and apprehensions are the outcome of her having a negative self-image. Her small town background and inadequate education are enough to make her feel inferior in a city like Vancouver : "Nearly twenty years here, and I don't know the place at all or feel at home. May be I wouldn't have, in any city. I never like to say so to anybody. I always think they might think it's obvious I'm from a small town".[10] The novel begins with her anxiety about her deteriorating physical appearance: "Sitting on the bed, Stacey sees mirrored her own self in the present flesh insufficiently concealed by a short

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mauve nylon nightgown with the ribbon now gone from the neckline, and one shoulder frill yanked off by some kid of other"(*F.D.*, p.2). These inadequacies haunt her day in and day out. She contemplates : "Everything would be a all right if only I was better educated I mean, if fI were, of if I were beautiful, Okay, that is asking too much. Let's say if I took off ten or so pounds. Listen, Stacey, at thirty nine, after four kids you can't expect to look like a sylph (*F. D.*, p. 2) Burdened with low self-esteem and feelings of self-rejection, she is unsure of herself and her relationship with her husband. When he is late in returning home, she imagines him enjoying his dinner somewhere else in the company of a more pleasant looking person: "He won't. Would you, in His place ? No come on, be practical, Mac won't be here" (*F. D.*, p, 120).

Self-concept is not something permanent and unchangeable. When the concept of self is changed, alteration in behaviour is a predictable concomitant, says Carl Rogers.[11] Stacey's fling with Luke restores her faith in herself : "Well, nobody makes loves with someone who absolutely repels them. He could'nt have, if he'd felt that way (*F. D.*, p. 183). Though she admits that her sex adventure with Luke was nothing more than a "Shameless shameful attempt at rejuvenation" (*F. D.*, p. 219) yet, it makes "her feel like about a million dollar or so" (*F. D.*, p. 184). That someone can still find her desirable gives such a tremendous boost to her self-image that she finds herself infused with courage to face life with all its demands and frustrations. She feels strong enough to face and tackle the situations that "will be pure bloody murder". Purged of all inner conflicts she understands herself better, and appreciates Mac in a way she has not for years: "Old Mac has to pretend he's absolutely strong and now I see, he doesn't believe a word of it and never has. Yet, he is a whole lot stronger than he thinks he is and so is Stacey."

To reiterate the main arguments one can say that both Anita Desai and Margaret Laurence regard family as the psychic agency of society. In their fictional world self-concept emerges out of the interaction within the family fold, and places considerable

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implications on human experience, since it involves a search for meaning of life itself. In a subtle but decisive manner the self-image structures the ways in which their protagonists perceive and orient themselves within their social environment. In the ultimate analysis self-concept is a kind of homeostasis at a higher psychological level : a gestalt, a configuration in which the alteration of one minor aspect completely alters the whole pattern. The discussion has further revealed that in the background of any neurotic or psychotic sufferer is the tendency to avoid self-evaluation conflicts by living a cosmetic life of pretense.

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[2]Anita Desai, *Cry, The Peacock* (New Delhi : Orient Paperbacks, 1980),p. 36.

[3]R.D. Laing, "Ontological Insecurity", *The Self in Social Interaction*, p. 415. According to Laing "for the individual whose being is secure in the primary experiential sense, relatedness with others is potentially gratifying : whereas the ontologically insecure person is preoccupied with preserving rather than gratifying himself. The ordinary circumstances of living threaten his low threshold of security".

[4]Anita Desai, *Voices in the City*, (Delhi : Orient Paperbacks, 1982),p. 8.

[5]William James "The Self", *The Self in Social Interaction,* p. 44.

[6]Anita Desai, *Where Shall We Go This Summer* ? (Delhi : Vision Books Private Limited, 1982), p. 47.

[7]Margaret Laurence, *The Stone Angel,* (Toronto : McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1968), p. 35.

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[9]Margaret Laurence, *A Jest of God,* (Toronto : McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1974), p.47.

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[10]Margaret Laurence, *The Fire Dwellers* (Toronto : McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1978), p. 5.

[11]Carl S. Rogers, "Self-Concept," p. 39.

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SHRAWAN K. SHARMA

LAMPMAN'S POEMS IN TWO HALVES : A MYSTICAL EXPERIENCE

Among the group of the sixties–poets born near Confederation of 1867 who came to their maturity in the 1890s–there are three poets whose poetry is permeated with a mystical rhythm. These poets are Charles G.D. Roberts, Carman and Archibald Lampman. Charles G. D. Roberts overstrains his Emersonian striving towards a cosmic consciousness ; Carman captures the Oversoul ; Lampman has almost a mystical sense.[1] The purpose of the present paper is to study how Lampman experiences this mystical sense in his poems.

If we look into the poems of Archibald Lampman (1861–99) carefully, we would find that his poems have two juxtaposed worlds. These two worlds form the two halves of the poems. In the first half of the poems, he is seen gloomy and experiences a strange, fleeting emptiness in life. Sometimes this design is presented with partial harmony and peace. But the second half of the poems presents a world endowed with joy and peace where a new hope springs. In his poems Lampman draws a line of demarcation between the two lives and exalts the moral quality felt in nature. Sandra Djwa, though differs in his objective, has the same view about the design of Lampman's poems. She says that Lampman's poems are superficial descriptions of peace, beauty and truth received by the poet as he 'dreams' in nature', and the unpleasant 'real' which the idyllic vision attempts to subjugate; the

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"dissonant roar of the city." She recognizes the deceptiveness and deeper significance of Lampman's poetry and equates one part with 'benevolent nature' and another with "the uneasy and disturbing undertone of city or society.[13]

In the first half of the poems he deals with life in society where even religious ceremonies, rituals and prayers are mingled with

A sound of some great burden
That lay on the world's dark breast,
Of the old, and the sick and the lonely
And the weary that cried for rest.[4]

Though the poet does not clearly indicate the cause of this degenerated life but, of course, he seems to say that it is because of the undue haste in the performance of the ordinary duties of life. He shows it through the animal nature of the people who live in the world where 'an awful sound keeps roaring on continually/And crashes in the ceaseless round/of a gigantic harmony.[5] There he hears the "monstrous cry" of the mortal race. Contrary to the spiritual nature he sees in man the eternal, elemental brute and feels convinced that man does not see "with human eye." Just for the momentary pleasure man is killing man. He gives a message to man to be balanced in joy and sorrow, loss and gain because they are not intransient. As a whole, it is a cycle which moves on continuously :

Without grief the golden days go by,
So soft we scarcely notice how they wena
And like a smile half happy, or sigh,
The summer passes to her quiet end,
And soon too soon around the cumbered leaves
Sly frosts shall take the creepers by surprise
And through the wind-touched reddening weeds shall rise
October with the rain of ruined leaves.[6]

Unfortunately man has shut his eyes from this reality. Lampman like Arnold, neither longs for death, nor revolts against

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its set up. There is no anger and resentment in him. Like Arnold he does not struggle in the society but behaves like a spectator who happens to be a passer by. Of course, the life of the city, he regards with distaste and foreboding and speaks of that with reluctance and compassion. It is because there man pursues diverse objects and does not have singleness of purpose. His energy is dissipated on diversity of pursuits. His mind is clouded and muddy, and his heart is hardened so that he is without the feelings for deep emotions. To the poet such modern life 'gives no bliss yet spoils the rest.' He says :

I passed through the gates of the city,
The streets were strange and still,
Through the doors of the open churches
The organs were moaning shrill.
Though the doors and great high windows
I heard the murmur of prayer,
And the sound of their solemn singing
Streamed out on the sunlit air [7]

The modern life, according to him, as indicated earlier, is marked with the disease of feverishess which has gone to the deep roots. It has deadened the hearts of the people and has crushed all finer and nobler emotions in life. Due to this loss of Arnoldian glade[8] , the poet

. . . strayed through the midst of the city
Like one distracted or mad.
Oh Life ; Oh Life ; (He) kept saying,
And the very word seemed sad.[9]

(emphasis mine)

As mentioned above, the loss of glade — a loss of values — is alike, both in Arnold and Lampman but they differ in their attitude to it. Arnold passes through different phases of life, full of bitterness, tragedy and gloom. Broken and disgusted in life, in poetry he wistfully tries to flee its course and thinks that death alone can relieve him from all its burdens. With all his indifference towards this world, he cannot avoid the gloom which inextricably

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has become his life companion. In such a world Arnold finds no solace and peace for himself and debates if death can be the rescue. He holds

'Tis death: and peace, indeed, is here,
And ease from shame, and rest from fear.
there nothing can dismarble now
But is a calm like this, in truth,
The crowning end of life. . .[10]

To him there is nothing to console in life. Life appears to be a dreamland of pomp and show and has no joy, no love, no light, no peace and no relief. Doubts and disbelief, scepticism and agnosticism have conspired to roll back the waves of faith from the world. In this way, in the world the people have become strange, distant and incomprehensible to each other. Lampman also hears "the inhuman music lifts and falls/where nothing rests."[11] He feels sad to see this degeneration and remembers the past with the hope of betterment :

It was not always so
Fair voices echoed from its stones
The light above it leaped and shone :
Once there were multitudes of men,
That built that city in their pride,
Until its might was made, and then
They withered age by age and died.[12]

No doubt, to see this demarcation the poet feels sad but he does not become pessimistic. Still he sees a ray of hope which finds its full expression in the lap of Nature. Here he sees new hope and holds that still the world be made anew by blessed thought. It is nothing less than the return of the health after long illness. As soon as he passes "through the gates of the city" and hears "the small birds sing and bell ringing" in the midst of nature, his personality is translated. This he experiences when he

. . . lay on the earth's quiet breast,
The poplar fanned. . . with shadows,

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And the very sand [Him] to rest.
Blue blue was the heaven above (Him),
And the earth green at [His] feet.
Oh life ; Oh life ; [He] kept saying
And the very word seemed sweet.[13]

(emphasis mine)

One thing is noteworthy here that it is not always the flight from the life in society to life in nature when Lampman overcomes the morbid atmosphere and gets a solace. D.G. Jones agrees in 1970 that Lampman's main need was "to escape from the garrison of a culture" that was oppressive, to escape from the boredom and sterlity", "to embrace the wilderness of nature".[14] "Lampman's verse," says Jones is "a direct echo of Wordsworth;" like the English poet Lampman had "an excessively benevolent conception of nature and an excessively passive conception of man's relationship to her."[15] Many times for this purpose he evokes the sense of darkness in nature itself. But in this aspect he differs from the other Canadian poets on whom nature,

> ... makes an impression of its primeval lowlessness and moral nihilism, its difference to the supreme value placed on life within human society, its faceless, its mindless unconsciousness which fosters life with benevolence and destroys without malice.[16]

However, there are ample references of a gloomy world in nature projected in his poetry. In the first half of the poems like "Heat", "September", "October", "Midnight", "Solitude", "A Summer Evening", "Winter", "Snow" and "Among the Orchard" he deals with the gloomy world of nature in comparison to that of the later half of the poems. The depiction of nature is symbolically the life in society and often shrouded in darkness, in fog or swirling sand. And as in the following lines:

... in the outland wilderness
The forest echo with unwonted dins;

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In clamorous gangs the gathering woodmen press
Northward, and the stern winter's toil begins.[17]

An identical picture further can be seen in his poem "Solitude" which opens in the following manner:

How still it is here in the woods. The trees
Stand motionless, as if they do not dare
To stir, lest it should break the spell. The air
Hangs quiet as spaces in a marble frieze.[18]

In such descriptions Lampman does not present the seamy side of nature, but the picture he portrays, lacks the joy and hopes and echoes the sense of gloom. Like "Solitude", "Snow" begins with "White are the far off plains and white/The fading forest grow"; "Winter Evening" with "Down in the West the brimming plains beneath the sunset rests" and "September" with "The dry gray shocks stand peaked and withering". Here the poet does not seem to be in tune with nature, though it still possesses peace. The poet, perhaps condemns peace because it has an undertone of gloom and inaction. Such picture of nature unlike that of the world, is just likes dreams. And in the intervals of such dreams he says :

. . . . I hear
The cricket from the droughty ground ;
The grass-hoppers spin into mine ear
A small innumerable sound
I lift mine eyes sometimes to gaze.
The burning sky-line blinds my sight :
The woods far off are blue with haze.
The hills are drenched in light.[19]

Now the poet enters the world of joy and peace found in the later half of the poem. He presents this region as a place of deep or variegated shadow where the objects of nature spin and dance. Usually it is set in the open of an upland field or in some sun dappled meadow, deep in the woods. The persons who inhabit it, who are mostly farmers, live in their innocence and

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. . . . labor without slack
Till twilight deepens round the spouting mill ;
feeding the loosened sheaves, or with fierce will,
Pitching waist-deep upon the dusty stack.[20]

Here the poet is shown very lucky and fortunate in being placed in such a place where the evil aspects of modern life do not spoil the serene course of life in nature. He does not experience now the weariness of the spirit caused by repeated disappointments, and the feeble doubts and lack of confidence born of repeated failures. In his march, when the poet is completely divorced from degenerated life, the unusual sounds like "hoar", "groan" and "moan" which perturb him, slowly die and he experiences some thing else. He says :

Yet some wild thing is in my ears ;
I hold my breath and hark ;
Out of the depth I seem to hear
A crying in the dark ;
No sound of man of wife or child,
No sound of beast that groans,
Or of the wind that whistles wild,
Or of the tree that moans ;[21]

Here is again a kind of change in Lampman's attitude as peace is wrapt with a fearful, Tennysonian cry that haunts the poet. Now the force experienced by the poet is a source of fear and agitation. The sound made by this force is totally incomprehensible. It is like the sound heard in "October"—an incoherent utterance that is evidence of something living, something frightening, right at the heart of the existing universe. Lampman recognizes this element of the universe throughout his poetry. In "Midnight" he holds :

I know not what it is I hear ;
I bend my head and hark ;
I cannot drive it from mine ear,
That crying in the dark.[22]

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(emphasis mine)

One thing is noteworthy here that Lampman, in spite of the "crying in the dark" does never deviate from his mystical quest. It is because of this that the poet feels a mystical presence around him in nature and "The days long trouble loose their sting and pass/ Peaceful the world and peaceful grows my heart."[23] Evelyn Underhil in her book, *Mysticism : A Study in the Nature and Development of Man's Spiritual Consciousness*, calls such an experience, 'The Awakening of the Self.' Lampman reaches this mystical consciousness through the transfigured senses of taste, sound, odour, touch and sight. In this mystical state of consciousness, the poet becomes very receptive. He communicates with the objects of cosmos and understands their language. He can hear even "far in among the motionless trees / shadows that sleep upon the shaven sod / The thud of dropping apples."[24] He can "Reach on reach / Stretch plots of perfumed orchard where the bees/Murmur among the full fringed golden rod /or cling half-drunken to the rotten peace."[25] Such experiences cannot be apprehended rationally and appreciated logically. Hence he exposes himself by uttering "I know not", "I see", "I hear". Thier exuberant impact finds an ebullient expression thus :

And yet to me not this of that
Is always sharp or always sweet ;
In the sloped shadow of my hat
. . . I think some blessed power
Hath brought me wandering idly here,
In the full furnace of this hour,
My thoughts grow keen and clear.[26]

In fact, Lampman desires the Emersonian unity [27] with the universe but cannot allow himself to have it. "Conscious stress" plagues him ; he wants to experience the "elemental joy" and to be part of the "eternal movement of life, but he has a kind of complex, ambivalent feelings and sensitivity towards nature."[28] However, throughout his poetry, in nature, he experiences some mystical "Power" though upto a particular stage, i.e. the awakening of the

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self. This stage is absent while the poet marches in the city. These two aspects—the evil power in the city and the "blessed power" in the nature, thus constitute the poems of Lampman.

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[1]*Canadian Verse* ed. Ralph Gustafson (England : Penguin Books, 1984) p. 29.

[2]Sadra Djwa, "Lampman Fleeting Vision", *Canadian Literature*, 56 (1973) 22.

[3]*Canadian Literature*. 22

[4]*Canadian Verse*, p. 175.

[5]*Ibid*, p. 82.

[6]*Ibid*., p. 78. This reminds of Shelley's "Ode to The West Wind' in which his optimism overcomes pessimism when he realizess the cycle of Time : "If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?"

[7]*Canadian Verse*, p. 75.

[8]Matthew Arnold in his poetry employs three regions — "Forest Glade", "Darkling Plain" or "Burning Plain" and "Wide Glimmering Sea". There the first is a period of joyous inncocence when one lives in harmony, peace and joy in which suffering subsides and the first region regained. Like Arnold, Lampman too moves from the hustle and bustle of life to nature where sadness is translated into joy.

[9]*Canadian Verse*, p. 75.

These lines recall to mind the lines of Keats where the world is a place of

The weariness, the fever and the fret
Here, where men sit and hear each other groan;
Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last grey hairs,
Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin and dies ;
Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
And lead -eyed despairs,
Where beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes
Or new love pine at them beyond tomorrow.

–"Ode to Nightingale."

[10]*Arnold Poetical Works*. Ed. C.B. Tinker and H.F. Lowry (London : OUP, 1949) pp. 1-2.

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[11]*Canadian Verse*, p. 82.

[12]*Ibid.*, p. 83.

[13]*Canadian Verse*, p. 76.

In an identical tone Wordsworth also presents the conception of human life in the everlastingness of Nature :

> Our noisy years seem moments in the being
> Of the external silence.

Wordsworth Poetical Works. ed. Thomas Hutchinson., (Oxford : 1981), p. 241.

[14]D.G. Jones. *Butterfly On Rock* (Toronto : Univ of Toronto Press, 1970). p. 98.

[15]*Idem.*

[16]Quoted in *Literature of the World.* Ed. Bruce King (London : Routledge and Kegan Paul 1974), pp. 44–45.

[17]*Canadian Verse*, p. 76.

[18]*Ibid.* p. 78.

[19]*Canadian Verse*, p. 75.

[20]*Ibid.*, p. 77.

[21]*Ibid*, p. 80.

[22]*Canadian Verse*, p. 81.

[23]*Ibid.*, p. 79.

[24]*Ibid.*, p. 80.

[25]*Idem.*

[26]*Canadian Verse*, p. 75.

[27]In "An Old Lesson From the Fields" Lampman says : "I saw myself made clear as in a glass" an image, which in a sense, is not unlike that used by Emerson when he claims, "I become a transparent ball."

Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Nature*, 1836 Cited in *Foerster*, p. 307.

[28]Richard Arnold, "The Clearer Self". Lampman's Transcendental Visionary Development, *Canadian Poetry*, 32 (1984), 41.

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BOOK REVIEWS

ROBERTSON DAVIES : *The Lyre of Orpheus*

Robertson Davies was born in Thamesville, Ontario, on 28th August 1913. Formerly, Governor, Stratford Shakespeare Festival, Ontario, Member, Board of Trustees, National Arts Centre, he now holds the title of Master Emeritus. He is an eminent essayist, a prolific playwright and a noted novelist.

The Lyre of Orpheus is the third in the trilogy of novels on the life and influence of Francis Cornish. The Cornish Foundation set up with the money left by the late Francis Cornish decides to bestow its patronage on the arts. Arthur Cornish, nephew and heir of the late Francis Cornish, and the Chairman of the Foundation decides to take up a very daring project. He makes extremely ambitious plans of patronizing the completion, and the staging of an unfinished opera by E.T.A. Hoffman, a Romantic Composer. This becomes a spring-board for a penetrating psychological study of all the characters involved and for a very effective commentary on Canadian Culture and Society.

All the major characters in the novel are in search of their real identities. Davies seems to be deeply influenced by the Jungian psychology, particularly the division of the psyche, and the quest for unity and a real understanding of the self. When he writes about

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the central theme of most of his novels and plays, he uses Jung's phrase, "The search for the self."

Interestingly, it is the opera, *ARTHUR OF BRITAIN, OR THE MAGNANIMOUS CUCKOLD*, about which the members of the Foundation have such great plans, that helps them to understand their real selves and their proper role in life. Most of the members re-live the story of King Arthur, the legendry King of England, his Queen Guenevere and his knights. Arthur Cornish, the Chairman of the Foundation, as his name suggests, is very like King Arthur. He becomes the Magnanimous Cuckold in reality. But in contrast with King Arthur he gains not just the deep love of his grateful and admiring wife but also a son which he would not have had otherwise. His wife Maria is cast in the role of Queen Guenevere and his friend Geraint Powell is Lancelot. Simon Darcourt plays the role of the magician Merlin.

Darcourt's involvement with the Scheme of the Foundation bring to light the hidden traits of his personality. To his own astonishment he, a priest and a resepcted professor, commits a theft. He finds that he is not just Marlin, he is also the Fool, in the Gypsy's spread of cards, "the footloose traveller, urged onwards by something outside the confines of intellect and caution". In the picture on the Card this "something", which is instinct, is represented by a dog nudging the fool in diractions he had never intended to take. Darcourt writes the biography of the late Francis Cornish. He takes his task as a biographer so seriously that he steals from the University Library and from the National Gallery of Art in order to find out everything about Francis Cornish. His keen observation and his intelligent deductions help him to unearth the facts about the most important period of Francis Cornish's life. He establishes Francis Cornish as a good artist, not just a painter who knew how to restore or fake the pictures of old masters. Darcourt persuades the bigwigs of the National Gallery by his adroit arguments and Arthur's money to let them open the 'Francis Cornish Memorial Gallery'. He also plays the role of a very sagacious and faithful friend to both Arthur and Maria.

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Davies shows that a person may have entirely different and even opposing elements in his personality. Darcourt is a professor, a scholar and also the fool who acts on instinct. Hulda Schnakenburg, who completes the opera, is a foul mouthed, extremely dirty, and aggressively independent girl but she is also a highly talented, sensitive and insecure child who craves for love and affection. Similarly Powell is a faithful friend, still he deceives his friend Arthur's wife, without being in love with her, by impersonating Arthur. He feels bad about being the cause of Arthur's unhappiness but enjoys speaking rhetorically about it before Dacourt. Again, Maria is a modern young woman, highly educated, sophisticated, very charming and very beautiful, but is, in her heart of hearts, a real gypsy girl. She dislikes her gypsy mother but is very like her in many respects. Maria rarely goes to visit her mother and uncle even though they live in the basement of her house. Robertson Davies uses the position of their dwellings to propound his theory that one cannot break away from one's roots and that hereditary traits are an important aspect of one's personality. Maria's roots are symbolically and in reality down in the basement of the building she lives in, whether she likes it or not. She cannot uproot the qualities she has inherited. When she finds herself in the wrong she dolls herself up in red in a gesture of defiance and looks very like her mother.

Davies gives a realistic portrayal of the problems involved in staging an opera, which is sometimes serious and sometimes comic. As he is a playwright and was Governor of Stratford Shakspeare Festival, Ontario he has a first hand knowledge.

The title of the novel, *The Lyre of Orpheus* gives a hint to the large number of symbols used. The opera becomes "the lyre of Orpheus (which) opens the door of the underworld". It brings to the surface the hidden instincts and emotions of all the people associated with it. The opera becomes 'the lyre of orpheus' even in the case of its dead composer, E.T.A. Hoffman or Etah, who is in a *Limbo* after death. Etah has to stay in Limbo because he left his work incomplete. He is very glad when the opera is given a

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complete form and watches everything very carefully. The cards spread by Maria's gypsy mother symbolize the real identities of the people associated with the opera.

Robertson Davies has an urbanity and elegance which makes the novel unique in Canadian fiction.

– *PRATIBHA TYAGI*

BRIAN MOORE : *The Emperor of Ice-Cream. McClelland* and Stewart, Toronto, 1985

A very simple novel with naive yet realistic characterisations. It is full of poignant humour and is sarcastic about the ways and beliefs of grown-up.

Gavin (the hero) is the son of a middle class Irish lawyer. Mr. Burke (Gavin's Father) has all through been a thorough conformist and a prig. He has suffered a lot from the British Govt. and finds it obligatory to be anti-British and pro-German. World War II is in the offing. Ireland and other allied countries are up in arms against Germany. The novel is set in such a background.

Gavin joins the F.A.P. Ireland being at logger-heads with Britain, it is a mixed response from the Irish citizens towards the war. Those who suffered at the hands of British are deadly against this alliance and favour Hitler on the sly.

Moreover, the Irish Catholics have hateful attitude towards the converted Irishmen. But Gavin has nothing to do with these anti-attitudes. He is purely anti-adult autocracy. Gavin perchance, is lend with an eye which can perceive, dispassionately the atrociously aberrated adult attitudes. War for him is the only solution to the discriminatory adult responses to life situations.

He wants the total annihilation of his city Belfast so that he is spared of the torture of passing London Matric or pursuing higher studies. Gavin has a defying attitude towards the set systems of the civilized living. For instance, he is repelled by the notion that one can gain respectability only when one has been to the prestigious citadels of knowledge dispensers. He rebels against all this. His

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only aim is to settle and resolve the dichotomy between his White Angel/ and Black Angel/.

Gavin is disgusted with his brother Owen who blindly and imperceptively tows the line set by his elders. He is shoked to realise that Owen has nothing to do with 'Yeats' or 'T.S. Eliot' or for that matter, with any such sensitive intellectual who epitomizes the social and intellectual revolutionary zeal.

He joins F.A.P. cherishing at the same time, a secret hope that Belfast will be bombed. Gavin will be free from the vilification of his elders. Nor will he be a sufferer on his brother's account, whose rising academic laurels are a sure menace to his academic inabilities. War will liberate him and he will rejoice over the levelling effects of war. A free place open for all – worthy or unworthy. And, perhaps, his other comrades also wish for the same. They are a mixed and a queer lot. Some are in their advanced old age and some quite young – in their mere teens like Gavin. They are in A.R.P. merely to fulfil their everyday needs. At the same time they get the opportunity of being off the doles and gain some respectability by being employed. War is godsend for them who otherwise are the drifters – the social derelicts.

Gavin too finds himself a social misfit. He doesn't believe in religion but is at the same time beset by his moral complication. Like his brother Owen, he cannot be a mugging parrot who is also unaffected by the crushing physical demands of growing manhood. Moreover Owen has nothing to do with the delicate barometres of human consciousness. But Gavin is miserable. Freddy, another A.R.P. guy is responsible for initiating him into the adult world of sex and wine, guilt and passion.

The small boy Gavin's anguish and frustrations over his own complexities take the toll of his peace of mind. But he finds it impossible to fall into the routine ways of adults. He wants to explore the world around on his own—anew and afresh. He finds the A.R.P. Guys innocent and devoid of complex aims and puerile ambitions. But can he survive in their world? Perhaps not.

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Perhaps he will be the same old man like his father who subsisted on 'a Collar' and 'a tie'.

The writer has been wonderfully successful in bringing out the anguish in a boy of teen years. His adolescent crushes and accompanying complications have been highlighted in the most authentic manner. Perhaps one can see some autobiographical shades in the characterisation of Gavin. The author himself had a chequered career and perhaps Gavin reflects Moore at places.

The story is a simple down to earth picture of the low middle class. A simple tale of ordinary people stuck in the mire of mundane day to day affairs.

It is bereft of big people with superior intellects who may, eventually, face life like Gavin and his fellows did when shorn of their high-flown masks.

Perhaps man basically is mediocre with of course a few exceptions thrown around. Perhaps everybody will behave like Frank Price did if one has to eke out livelihood under odd circumstances.

The women characters too are mediocre and stay on the caricature stage only. Nothing high flown for the seekers of rich intellectual fare. Everybody in the book is cocooned in that down-to-earth hand to mouth existence. Life here means being able to breathe, eat and then sink in oblivion of any sort—slumber or death. A constricting world even for Gavin – a sensitive boy of teen years.

The book is full of poignant humour. Mr. Craig – The Post–Officer at A.R.P. place has been drawn as a very ludicrous character. He is always on the prowl to catch A.R.P. boys red-handed doing some mischief while his own conduct defies all limits of decency.

His dalliances with one of the A.R.P. girls are comical. His nightly surprise visits to his comrades gives rise to comic situations.

The characterisation of Craig reflects the author's ingenuity in judging human absurdities alongwith its follies and foibles.

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Seeing Freddy reading "The Waste Land" he asks: 'What's that supposed to mean? "It's a poem" "A Pome, a pome–what do you want to read pome for? Only girls read poems" (p.65) The novel has humourous streak running throughout it, which makes it quite absorbing and interesting. It is a pure comment on the absurd social ambience and the essential human nature. The incorrigible human malice which force Craig to use the bunch of A.R.P. boys is a sad reflection of man's diseased nature. His only fear is lest : ". . . the sniggering machine guns in the hands of the young ones . . . . There'll be no explosion. . . . Your father's world will not be blown." (p.76)

Gavin's encounter with 'gays' leaves him baffled. ". . . this was a grown-up world, undreamed of . . ." (p.97).

Gavin's exposure to the adult life experiences mature him quite perceptibly. The morgue scene in the novel makes one realise Gavin's need to establish himself gainfully in the social milieu. It is the inescapable desire in every human heart to prove worthy and superior in relation to others. Gavin too cannot escape it – like Pincher (in Pincher – Martin) (Golding) created Rockall for himself but he proved a failure because he found it useless to create by himself and for himself alone. Belfast is bombed. Gavin feels happy. He sees the hope for establishing himself in a meaningful manner: ". . . deliver himself from the sham of Church attendance of pretending belief for his parents sake. . . " (p. 225).

In the end one sees Gavin has suddenly grown beyond the contradictions of his White Angel and Black Angel. He matures abruptly after the bombing of his city Belfast and he takes the surer way of the grown-ups. It is no doubt the practical one but a sure one. An easy way out of the otherwise intricate and intractible problems of the life which emanate from the irreducible self of a man. He can understand the ironic life situations when he sees his bullish father being reduced to a helpless babe: "In the Candlelight, he saw that his father was crying. . . . His father was the Child now ; his, father's world was dead?" (p. 250).

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To sum up, the book is quite 'readable and absorbing' (Robert Fulford), without any literary pretensions.

Humour pervades throughout. A sharp and sweet humour, without any attempt at moralizing. A keen insight into the human psyche and a wonderful sketch of Mr. Craig – the A.R.P. Master.

—*USHA KAPURIA*

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R.S. PATHAK

T.S. ELIOT AND INDIAN POETICS : SOME POINTS OF INTERSECTION

T.S. Eliot is one of the most influential English critics of the present century. He added new possibilities to literary criticism by offering new avenues and enlarging the range of its rhetorical potential. It would, however, be improper to consider him as a 'literary dictator' today or even as an 'international hero', as Schwartz does.[1] Nor would it be just to call him , as Watson does, 'a shoplifter in a departmental-store'.[2] Eliot's reputation is undergoing a wane, but his worth is undeniable. As Rene Wellek has pointed out, Eliot is "by far the most important critic of the twentieth century in the English-speaking world" and his "influence on the contemporary taste in poetry is most conspicuous".[3]

Eliot never cared to produce a systematic *Ars Poetica*. "I have no general theory of my own," he remarked. "The extreme of theorising about the nature of poetry, the essence of poetry if there is any, belongs to the study of aesthetics and is no concern of the poet or of a critic with my limited qualifications".[4] But Eliot was not oblivious of the significance of aesthetic norms. He wrote in 1948 : "We should have to have an aesthetic which somehow comprehended and transcended that of Poe and Valery".[5] An analysis of Eliot's critical writings reveals his aesthetic predilections. His theoretical pronouncements can be collated to decipher his views on certain important issues pertaining to creative writing.

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Basically an empirical critic, Eliot regarded his criticism as a 'by-product' of his 'poetry-workshop' or at least 'a prolongation of the thinking that went into the formation' of his own poetry.[6] His criticism is often described as the criticism of a poet. He was particularly at home when he was writing about poets whom he himself liked. A poet-critic's views on poetry should be assessed, he said, in relation to his own poetry, and his theories should arise out of his practice and not the other way round.[7] Eliot's reconsiderations of individual authors have often been considered more valuable than his theoretical pronouncements. His theoretical remarks, however, are no less interesting. To quote Rene Wellek again, "Eliot is at least equally important for his theory of poetry ... which is much more coherent and systematic than most commentators have allowed". Eliot's theoretical postulates deserve a more serious attention.

The main problem that a reader has to face while going through Eliot's criticism, is due to his frequent shifts and recantings. At times he flings his statements in such a flippant manner that it becomes hard to believe that he actually means what he says and he says what he means. On certain other occasions, we come across conflicting theoretical stances. Drawing attention to Eliot's tendency of mystification, Laing has tried to show that he is 'torn between his desire to reveal himself and his desire to conceal himself'.[8] What goes to make matters still worse in Eliot's attitude to his own statements. He often behaves like a somewhat irresponsible parent to his theoretical postulates, leaving them like infants on various doorsteps, letting other people raise them and acknowledging only those whose faces make up well.

Some critics have variously denigrated Eliot's criticism. Watson, for example, finds it as nothing better than 'a smoke-screen to the rest of his career' and recommends it to be written off as a 'vast hoax'.[9] J.C. Ransom, to cite one more instance, ascribes Eliot's 'theoretical innocence' to his lack of a sound aesthetic foundation.[10] Eliot's criticism, however, should be read as a part of the man – and a valuable part for that matter – and continuous with his poetry and its preoccupations. In order to arrive at a balanced assessment of Eliot's theoretical postulates, their close study, preferably of a com-

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parative nature, can be of considerable value. Eliot himself seems to be in favour of such an approach. He says that "theories of poetry may be tested by their power of refining our sensibility by increasing our understanding".[11] At attempt has been made in the present paper to consider Eliot's main theoretical pronouncements *vis-a-vis* those in Indian poetics.

W.B. Yeats alluded to him as 'a famous poet and student of Sanskrit'.[12] It was during his second stay at Harvard (1911-12) that Eliot studied Sanskrit under the guidance of C.R. Lanman and J.H. Woods, which left him 'in a state of enlightened mystification'.[13] Eliot's knowledge of Sanskrit could not have been profound, but its genuineness cannot be doubted. While emphasizing "The Unity of European Culture", he himself confides that he 'studied the ancient Indian languages', Sanskrit and Pali, and 'read a little poetry too' written in them and that his 'own poetry shows the influence of Indian thought and sensibility'.[14] Eliot's interest in Indian literature, thought and sensibility significantly affected his own poetry and criticism. It enlarged his sensibility in more ways than one and, as C.D. Narasimhaiah observes, "But for Indian thought and sensibility he would have written altogether different kind of poetry".[15] It would be worth while to find out correspondences, if there are any, between Eliot's pronouncements and those of Indian aestheticians.

It has been categorically maintained by an Indian scholar that Eliot 'had not come in contact with Indian poetics at all'.[16] In a letter (the copy of which is with Professor P. Lal of Writers Workshop) Eliot himself denied to have read Bharata's *Natyasastra*. But the use of terms like *vibhava* and others in the same letter shows it clearly that he was not unfamiliar with terms and concepts found in Indian poetics. Eliot's interest in poetic drama led him to Indian drama and dramaturgy, to which he has referred more than once. In his essay on "Seneca and Elizabethan Tradition" he remarks that although "The theatre is a gift which has not been vouchsafed to every race, even of the highest culture", "It has been given to the Hindus".[17] In his essay on "Philip Massinger" he hints at the possiblity of the growth of English poetic drama, which, he thinks 'might develop forms highly different from those of Greece or England, India or

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Japan'.[18] Eliot had nevertheless great regards for Indian dramatists like Bhasa and Kalidasa. He remarked :

> If one were saturated in the Japanese Noh, in Bhasa and Kalidasa, in Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripedes, Aristophanes and Meander, in the popular mediaeval plays of Europe, ... and if one were (which is impossible) equally sensitive to them all, would one not hesitate to decide that one form is more dramatic than another ?[19]

How various and genuine was his interest in Indian drama would be clear from the fact that he reviewed, for *The Criterion*, books on Indian drama, including one on *mudras*. [20] As P.S. Sastri points out, "it will be a profitable enquiry to trace the ideas and forms imbibed from his reading of Sanskrit literature".[21] The present paper is a modest attempt in the same direction, for, as Eliot himself would say, 'the time arrives when an examination of principles is necessary'.[22]

Eliot supplied certain critical terms and phrases to keep his contenders busy. Two such terms are : 'objective correlative' and 'dissociation of sensibility', which had a 'success in the world', as Eliot himself confides, 'Astonishing to their author'.[23] Although he was not sure of the validity of these terms, yet he derived a secret satisfaction from having coined them. He writes : "Even if I am unable to defend them now with any forensic plausibility, I think they have been useful in their time".[24] The terms have come to stay in modern criticism for good or for bad, despite all controversy associated with them.

It was in his essay on "Hamlet and His Problems" that Eliot used the phrase 'objective correlative' :

> The only way of expressing emotion in the form of an art is by finding an 'objective correlative'; in other words a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events; such that when the external facts which must terminate in sensory experience, are given the emotion is immediately evoked.[25]

It has been said that the idea of 'objective correlative' is nothing new and that the phrase itself was borrowed from one Washington Allston.[26] Eliot's statement, however, bears a closer

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resemblance to the pronouncement of Bharata, whose *Natyasastra* put forward the earliest known exposition of *rasa* or Sentiment. Bharata declared :

> na hi rasad rte kascid apyarthah pravartate. vibhavanubhavavyabhicarisanyogad rasanispattih.
>
> (No meaning acrues without Sentiments. The Sentiment is produced from a combination of Determinants, Consequents and Ensuants.)

Eliot's reference to the idea of 'objective correlative' is brief. But that it has been simmering in his mind for quite sometime is clear from his remarks found in other works. He held that "poetry has primarily to do with the expression of feeling and emotion; and that feeling and emotion are particular".[27] Elsewhere he remarked:

> All poetry may be said to start from the emotions experienced by human beings in their relations to themselves, to each other, to divine beings, and to the world about them; it is therefore concerned also with thought and action, which emotion brings about, and out of which emotion arises. But, at however primitive a stage of expression and appreciation, the function of poetry can never be simply to arouse these same emotions in the audience of the poet. [28]

Poetry arouses what Eliot calls 'art emotions' through various correlates. "The feeling, or emotion, or vision, resulting from the poem is something different from the feeling or emotion, or vision in the mind of the poet". [29]

Eliot's concept has been subjected to various kinds of criticism. Critics like Charlton and Swartz dismissed the phrase as unworthy of serious consideration. [30] Elizabeth Drew regarded it as a 'rare lapse into the hideous language of modern abstraction'.[31] Yvor Winters also found the term rather obvious. It meant to him "nothing more" than "that the poet starts with an emotion and after casting about finds objective data which be believes can be used to embody it". [32] A much more serious effort has been made by Eliseo Vivas to shatter the very foundation of Eliot's theory. According to Vivas, the concept implies 'a psychic anti-toxin'. He says :

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> Eliot grafts a somewhat revamped doctrine of Catharsis on to the popular theory of expression, and uses the product to justify poetry therapeutically. [33]

If Eliot's concept is read in the light of ancient Indian scholars' theory of *rasa*, it will emerge as a plausible theory of 'art emotions'.

The affinities between the postulates of Bharata and Eliot are really striking. As Krishna Chaitanya points out, "Both Eliot and Bharata are concerned with the manner in which the creative poet should plastically mould the aesthetic situation or context in such a way that it stimulates in the perceiver the same emotion which the poet originally felt". [34] Bharata did not explain how exactly it happens. The task was left to his commentators. Lollata offered the naturalistic version (*anukarye' nukartaryapi canusandhanabalat iti*) and Sankuka gave a logician's account based on inference *(anukaranarupatvadeva ca namantarena vyapadisto rasah)*. [35] Neither of these explanations took cognizance of the essential subjectivity of *rasa* experience. Bhattanayaka described the process of *rasa* realization as comprising the universalization of experience and enjoyment

> sadharanikaranatmana' bhidha to dvitiyenansena bhavakatvavyaparena bhavyamano raso' 'nubhavasmrtyad- ivilaksanena rajas tamo 'nuvedhavaicitryabalad drvtivistaravikasalaksanena parabrahmasvadasvidhena bhogyena param bhujyat iti.[36]

The process of *rasa*-realizaton, however, which still remained obscure, was to be explained satisfactrily by Abhinavagupta. The Sentiment, he said, was already presnt in the reader's heart in the form of a Determinant *(sthayibhava)*. The correlates only render it manifest with the help of the operation of the linguistic function of suggestion *(vyanjana)* :

> api tu hrdayasamvadat sahrdayatvabalat purnibhavisyad rasasvadankuribhavenanumanasmrtya sopanamaruhyeva tanmayibhavocitacarvanapranataya. na ca carvana prammanantarat yenadhuna smritih syat. catra laukika- pratyaksadipramanavyaparah. kintvalaukikavibhavadisanyogabalopanataivenyam carvana. sa ca pratyaksanugamopamanadilaukikapramana jainitaratyadyavavodhatah

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tatha yogipratyaksa janitatatasthapara samvittijnanat sakalavaisamyaparaga sunyasuddhaparayogigatasv- atmanandaikaghananubhavacyavisisyate.[37]

Indian aestheticians' concept of *rasa* thus comes quite close to Eliot's 'objective correlative'. The following observation by Eliot seems to be an elucidation of the Indian point of view :

> The experience, ... the elements which enter the presence of the transforming catalyst, are of two kinds : emotions and feelings. The effect of a work of art upon the person who enjoys it is an experience different in kind from any experience not of art. It may be formed out of one emotion, or may be a combination of several; and various feelings, inhering for the writer in particular words or phrases or images, may be added to compose the final result. Or great poetry may be made without the direct use of any emotion whatever : composed out of feelings solely.[38]

The great Indian aesthetician Anandavardhana considers *rasa* the most important end for the activity of the poet. He maintains:

drstapurva api hyarthah kavye rasaparigrahat/
sarve neva ivabhanti madhumasa iva drumah/

(*Dhvanyaloka* 4/4)

(Even trite subjects in poetry will put on a new freshness if they get into touch with Sentiment just as the same trees appear quite new with the advent of spring.)

Anandavardhana also mentions the possibility of combinations of *rasas*. But he pertinently suggests that while incorporating them, the poet "should take pains to avoid hindrances to them" (*virodhirasasambandhivibhavadiparigrahah* 3/18). Unlike Eliot, however, he cannot admit the possibility of great poetry without *rasa*. On the issue of combination of *rasas*, Bharata's position is still clearer :

na hyekarasajam kavyam kincidasti prayogatah/
bhavo vapi raso vapi pravrttivrttireva ca/
sa mantavyo rasah sthayi sesah sancarino matah/
te na sancarino jneyas te hi sthayitvamagatah/

(*Natvasastra* 7/126-28)

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(No composition can have one Sentiment only. If in an assemblage of States, Sentiments, Styles and Local Usages, any one Sentiment has varied representation, it should be considered as the Dominent Sentiment and the rest as the Transitory ones.)

Poetic delineation of sentiments and feelings, Eliot states, is associated with 'the element of surprize' which is essential to poetry'. [39] This element of surprize has been variously emphasized by Indian scholars as the most important distinguishing essential of poetry. Bharata has said that poetry has to be in the form of a cow's tail, bushy at the end, with a crowd of surprizes. [40] Kuntaka called poetry *vakrokti*, which he explained as *'vaidagdhyabhangibhaniti'*– a mode of expression depending on the peculiar turn given to it by the skill of the poet. [41] Abhinavagupta equated *vakrokti* with a 'consummate composition' and considered it as inhering all poetic figures. [42] Mammata went to the extent of maintaining that a 'figure is nothing else than strikingness itself' *(vaicitryamcalankarah)*.[43] Visvanatha described 'wonder' as a kind of 'expanding of the mind' *(camatkaras cittavistararupo vismayaparaparyayah)*.[44] Panditaraja Jagannatha defined it as transcendental artistic delight brought about by the contemplation of beauty. [45] The strikingness of poetic expression, resulting in 'wonder', has also been referred to in Vamana's *bandha-gumpha*, Anandavardhana's *ukti-vaicitrya*, and Rajasekhara's *bhaniti-vaicitrya*. Wonder, as Raghavan points out, "is an invariable element in all enjoyment, mundane or artistic. In art and literature, the element of surprise, extraordinariness, wonder is present everywhere". [46] There is thus a marked similarity between Indian aestheticians' and Eliot's standpoints in respect of *rasa* and its effect.

Eliot has repeatedly underscored the relevance of poetic impersonality. He writes :

> The progress of the artist is a continual self-sacrifice, a continual extinction of personality.
>
> The poet has, not a 'personality' to express, but a particular medium, which is only a medium and not a personality. ...

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> Poetry is not a turning loose of emotion, but an escape from emotion; it is not the expression of personality, but an escape from personality. [47]

The role of the poet's personality in poetic process is that of a catalyst which initiates the process of transformation. Emotions in poetry are detached or distanced, and have their life 'in the poem and not in the history of the poet'. [48] Edward Bullough also described the creative function in terms of what he called 'the psychical distance'. [49] It has been suggested that Eliot has 'advocated the depersonalization of poetry' .[50] Eliot's theory of impersonality has been responsible for a lot of critical dust, and there is no need to enter into a controvesy again. Even now critics continue to assess it negatively. Brian Lee, for example, remarks : "And finally, the whole idea is an implicit contradiction...Extinction could hardly lead to anything more than the perpetuation of those monuments – in a kind of literary cemetry. If the personality was actually extinguished in the moment of poetic creation, what would one be bringing to the past ?" [51] This is only a partial view of Eliot's theory.

Eliot's theory of impersonality as presented in "Tradition and the Individual Talent", says Bernard Bergonzi, was 'an inevitable response to the pervasive literary climate of subjectivism, inspiration, and self-expression'. [52] But Eliot was a late-comer in what Eric Heller terms as 'the pilgrimage towards poetic self-lessness'. Rilke had anticipated him in making impersonality 'an aesthetic philosophy'.[53] Indian theory of transpersonalization *(sadharanikarana)*, which evolved as a by-product of Bhattanayaka's discussion of the differentia of the poetic use of language, had already thrashed the issue in a more convincing way. In poetic language, denotation *(abhidha)* functions conjointly with the additional special functions which he calls *bhavakatva* and *bhojakatva*. It is the power of *bhavakatva* which achieves the *sadharanikarana*. It removes all personal relations and associations from the characters and their emotions and gives them a special ontological status. Bhattanayaka maintains :

> This power has the faculty of supressing the thick layer of mental stupor *(moha)* occupying our own consciousness : in

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poetry it is characterized by the absence of defects *(dosa)* and the presence of qualities *(guna)* and ornateness *(alankara)*; in drama by the four kinds of representation. *Rasa*, revealed by this power, is then enjoyed with a kind of enjoyment different from direct experience, memory, etc.[54]

The Indian theories of *rasa*-realization and *sadharanikarana* will thus accomodate Eliot's pronouncements on 'objective correlative' and impersonality. In the ultimate analysis, however, the Indian approach offers a more comprehensive and satisfactory explanation of artistic creation. Regarding Eliot's treatment of it, it may be noted that he is not precise in respect of his idea of emotions and feelings. His delineation of the potic process, i.e. the transformation of personal emotions into the impersonal poetic emotions, is also not very explicit. The method of objectification of the impersonal emotion, as proposed by Eliot, and its impact on the reader is somewhat vague. Eliot kept on changing his stand and, later, inserted his interests of philosophy and religion,[55] which detract the value of his critical postulates.

Language plays a crucial role in poetic creation. Anandavardhana is all for an indirect way of expression in poetry. He maintains :

> yo' rthah sahrdayaslaghyah kavyatmeti vyavasthitah/
> vacyapratiyamanakhyau tasyabhedavubhau smrtau/
>
> (*Dh A* 1/2)

> (The suggested meaning which is admired and coveted by the connoisseur, is reckoned as the soul of poetry. The Expressed and the Implied are its two varieties.)

He discusses three kinds of *dhvani—vastudhvani, alankaradhvani* and *rasadhvani*, of which the last goes to make the best kind of poetry. The three specimens of poetry, according to him, are : Poetry of Suggestion (*dhvani-kavya*), Poetry of Subordinate Suggestion (*gunibhutavyangya*) and Portrait Poetry (*citra-kavya*). Towards the end of his great work, *Dhvanyaloka*, he says :

> dhvanerittham gunibhutavyangyasya ca samasrayat/
> na kavyarthaviramo' sti yadi syat pratibhagunah/ (4/6)

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Again, the treatment of 'meaning' in poetry as found in Eliot invites a comparision with that of Indian aestheticians. Eliot, like Anandavardhana, does recognize the role of denotative meaning. 'The dictionary meaning of words', he says, 'cannot be disregarded with impunity'.[56] But, to him, it is hardly better than the 'bit of the nice meat for the house-dog' that 'the imaginary burglar is always provided with'.[57] He would give the pride of place to suggestion in poetry. This suggested meaning 'reveals itself gradually' in works of great poets like Shakespeare, which have 'several levels of significance'.[58] When Eliot speaks of lack of 'explicit reference of emotion to object' or absence of 'adequacy of the external to the emotion'[59], he is in fact drawing our attention to the inadequacy of denotation. Eliot defines the relationship between the denotative and suggested meaning in terms of a light. "Suggestiveness, " he says, "is the aura around a bright clear centre".[60] In order to have the aura (i.e. the suggested meaning), we must have a bright clear centre (i.e. the stated meaning). It is interesting to note that the *dhvani* theorists also consider the distinction between the denotative and suggested meaning on the basis of the lamp-jar metaphor. Anandavardhana states :

alokarthi yatha dipasikhayam yatnavanjanah/
tadupayataya tadvad arthe vacye tad adrtah/

yatha padarthadvarena vakyarthah sampratiyate/
vacyarthapurvika tad vat pratipattaysa vastunah/

svasamarthyavasenaiva vakyartham pratipadayan/
yatah vyaparanispattau padartho na vibhavyate/

tad vat sacetasam so' rtho vacyarthavimukhatmanam/
vuddhau tattvarthadarsinyam jhatityevavabhasate/

(*Dhvanyaloka* 1/9—12)

(Just as a man interested in perceiving objects in the dark directs his efforts towards securing the flame of a lamp since this is a means to realize his end, so also does one who is ultimately interested in the conventional meaning. Just as the

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purport of a sentence is grasped only through the sense of individual words, the knowledge of poetic sense is attained only through the medium of the literal meaning. Though by its own power the word-import conveys the sentence-import, it escapes notice once its purpose is served, and the poetic meaning flashes across the truth-perceiving minds of cultured critics when they are indifferent towards the conventional meaning.)

Again, Eliot talks about three 'voices' of poetry :

> The first voice is the voice of the poet talking to himself – or to nobody. The second is the voice of the poet addressing an audience, whether large or small. The third is the voice of the poet when he attempts to create a dramatic character speaking in verse; when he is saying, not what he would say in his own person, but only what he can say within the limits of one imaginary character.[60]

Eliot admits to have two aims in choosing this subject : "One is, to avoid saying anything that I have said before; the other is, to avoid saying anything that somebody else has said before". He is aware more than anyone else that "these aims together are almost impossible of realisation". He also suggests that "there is no truth that has not been discovered by our ancestors" and that "there is also no possible error by which they have not been deceived". This contention is rather uppish and betrays only Eliot's ignorance. His three 'voices', which are found in lyric, epic and drama respectively, and their interrelationships were very ably discussed by *dhvani* theorists in India – especially its greatest exponent, Anandavardhana in the 10th century. They are also in consonance with the three kinds of *dhvani* mentioned by him. Like Eliot, Anandavardhana also maintains that there will be no poetry when all the three kinds are absent. Anandavardhana has given three names to these three varieties : *svatah-sambhavi* (naturally possible), *kavipraudhoktisiddha* (imaginatively possible when the poet speaks in the first person), and *kavinibaddhapraudhoktisiddha* (imaginatively possible only when the poet speaks through a character). These varieties may get mixed with one another. Thus , as Krish-

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namoorthy concludes, "the essential secret of the poetic process so ably expounded by T.S. Eliot today was not unknown to ancient Indian literary critics. Though there are differences in detail, one cannot mistake the identity of approach".[61]

Eliot has said some very sensible things about the language of poetry. The main task of the poet, according to him, is 'to find the verbal equivalent for states of mind and feeling'.[62] No poet knew more than Eliot the predicament of undergoing an intolerable wrestle with words. Giving vent to his concept of an ideal medium, he writes in *Little Gidding* that it would be a language

> Where every word is at home
> Taking its place to support the others
> The word neither diffident nor ostentatious,
> An easy commerce of the old and the new,
> The common word exact without vulgarity,
> The formal word precise but not pedantic,
> The complete consort dancing together.

The last line brings to our mind the parity between word and meaning, which has been emphasized by Indian poets and critics in various ways. In good poetry sound and sense are commingled. Kalidasa writes '*vagarthaviv samprktau*' and Tulsidas talks of '*giraartha jala-bici sama kahiyata bhinna na bhinna*'. Indian aestheticians have clearly brought out this relationship. Bhamaha, for example, states that poetry results from a perfect commensurateness and organismic union (*sauhitya*) between form and content.[63] Rajasekhara explains *sauhitya* as the proper equipoise (*yathavat sahabhava*) between word and meaning.[64] Bhoja draws attention to the just proportion of word (*sabda-sammitatva*), by which he means the quality of sound and sense being held in a balance.[65]

Since word and meaning are of equal significance in poetry, meaning cannot claim greater attention. Eliot maintains : "For poetry to approach the condition of music ... it is not necessary that poetry should be destitute of meaning".[66] He further remarks :

> It is misleading of course to speak of material as creating or imposing its own form : What happens is a simultaneous development of form and material; for the form affects the

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> material at every stage; and perhaps all the material does is to repeat 'not that', 'not that' in the face of each unsuccessful attempt at formal organization; and finally the material is identified with its form.[67]

The Indian aesthetician Kuntaka maintains that an idea insufficiently expressed is 'dead' (*mrtakalpa*) and an expression devoid of idea or conveying something other than the intended idea is 'diseased' (*vyadhibhuta*).[68] The relationship between form and meaning has been described by him as a mutual tension or rivalry (*paraspara-spardhitva*) – a constant challenge or provocation to each to hold its own without yielding to the other.[69] Commenting upon Shakespeare, Coleridge had also said that in poetry expression and meaning are 'reconciled' and fight for articulation 'each with its shield before the breast of the other'.[70] Eliot has mentioned another kind of 'tension' which results (as in the case of Ezra Pound) 'due to constant opposition between free and strict'.[71] This is the quality which we find in oblique poetry (*vakrokti*).

> The final impression of an excellent piece of poetry is one of order and harmony. Eliot knows it very well that
> Out of the slimy mud of words ...
> There spring the perfect order of speech,
> and beauty of incantation.

" In The Music of Poetry" he explains the situation of the poet in relation to his language in the following words :

> Any language so long as it remains the same language, imposes its laws and restrictions and permits its own licence, dictates its own speech-rhythms and sound patterns. And a language is always changing; its developments in vocabulary, in syntax, pronunciation and intonation – even, in the long run, its deterioration – must be accepted by the poet and made the best of. ... The liberties that he may take are for the sake of order.[72]

While commenting upon a character's speech in Tourneur's *The Revenger's Tragedy*, Eliot again highlights the 'balance of contrasted emotion' resulting from the juxtaposition of 'an intensely strong attraction toward beauty and an equally intense fascination

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by the ugliness'. A 'number of floating feelings', he says, combine with it 'to give us a new art emotion'.[73] The combination of two emotions is, in Mammata's terms, *bhavasabalata* (variegation of emotions), one of which becomes subordinated (*gauna*) to help maintain the emotional unity.

Some of Eliot's comments are very close to those of Indian scholars, particularly the exponents of the *riti* and *guna* schools. The language of poetry, he holds, 'must not stray too far from the ordinary everyday language' because 'it cannot afford to lose its contact with the changing language of common intercourse'.[74] The words used by a poet, he adds, should be 'without vulgarity'; they should be characterized by 'absence of provinciality'.[75] Bana also said that poetry should not be 'vulgar' (*gramya*). Nor should it be, said Rudrata, 'bald' '(**apusta**). Eliot is also not in favour of poet's using 'ugly' words, by which he means 'words not fitted for the company in which they find themselves'.[76] Among Indian scholars, Bhamaha forcefully maintained that only words in vogue should be used, especially those which are pleasant to the ear and expressive of meaning.[77] Vamana, too is of the opinion that 'only those vernacular words should be used which are in current use' (*atiprayuktam desabhasapadam*).[78] He sums up his life-long experience of poetic diction and its manipulation in the following words :

adhanoddharane tavad yavad dolayate manah/
padasya sthapite sthairye hant siddha sarasvati/
yat padani jyajantyeva parivrttisahisnutam/
tam sabdanyasanisnatah sabdapakam pracaksate/

(*Kavyalankarasutravrtti* 1. iii/15 Comm.)

(The process of selection and rejection of words should continue so long as the mind is in doubt. Once the words are firmly fixed up, scholarship attains consummation.

When in a work words are so judiciously used that not even a single one of them can be raplaced, we have what stylisticians call a consummate composition.)

It may be noted that in his book on style and order, Eliot, not unlike Indian aestheticians, considers the most important qualities

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of poetic style to be three : "ordonnance, or arrangement and structure, precision in the use of words, and relevant intensity".[79] His ideal of poetic diction tallies in general with that of Indian thinkers.

There are thus many interesting similarities between Eliot's views of art emotion and the language of poetry. Eliot's concepts of the social value of poetry and 'the exceptional reader' of poetry are also quite similar to those of Indian aestheticians. Although Indian scholars' treatment of these issues emerges as more comprehensive and convincing, the correspondences are really striking. One is inclined to feel that Eliot, despite his denial, did have a familiarity with certain key ideas of Indian poetics, which helped him present his point of view in a rounded way. Eliot's indebtedness to the Imagists and the Symbolists cannot be ignored, but the close affinity between his statements and those of Indian scholars cannot be merely coincidental.

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   This would explain Eliot's interest in non-English poets and their poetics. In his essay on W.B. Yeats he wrote : "The kind of poetry I needed to teach me the use of my own voice, did not exist in English at all". *On Poetry and Poets* (London, 1957), p. 252.
6. Ibid., p. 107.
7. Eliot wrote : "What he (the critic) writes about poetry, in short, must be assessed in relation to the poetry he writes". *On Poetry and Poets*, p. 26. Elsewhere he remarked : "The poet's theories should arise out of his practice rather than his practice out of his theories". *To Criticize the Critic*, p. 42.

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Comparing Eliot's concept of 'objective correlative' with Bharata's theory of *rasa*, Chaitanya elsewhere writes : "The emotion here is *Rasa*, the set of objects, the *vibhavas*, situations and their patterned, organised presentation and the

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chain of events which include not only the episodic stream but also the stream of emotive reactions of the characters to them, the *anubhavas* and the *sancaribhavas*". *Sanskrit Poetics* (Bombay, 1965), pp. 19–20.

35. Abhinavagupta, *Abhinavabharati GOS* ed. edited by Ramakrishna Kavi (1956; 2nd rev. ed.). pp. 272–73.
36. Ibid., p. 284.
37. Ibid., pp. 285–86.

    See also R. Gnoli, *The Aesthetic Experience According to Abhinavagupta* (Banaras, 1968).
38. *The Sacred Wood*, p. 54.
39. *Selected Essays*, p. 308.
40. *Natyasastra* 20/46–47.
41. *Vakroktijivita* 1/10 Comm.
42. *Dhvanyalokalocana* (Chowkhamba ed.), p.47.
43. *Kavyaprakasa* 10/1 Comm.
44. *Sahityadarpana* 3/34.
45. *Rasagangadhara* (Chowkhamba ed.), p. 4
46. V. Raghavan. *The Number of Rasas* (Adyar, 1940), p. 194.
47. *The Sacred Wood*. p. 53, 56, 58.

    In a different context, Eliot writes : "No artist produces great art by a deliberate attempt to express his personality. He expresses his personality indirectly through concentrating upon a task in the same sense as the making of an efficient engine or turning of a jug or a table leg". *Selected Essays*, p. 114.
48. *The Sacred Wood*,. 59.
49. See E.M. Wilkinson (ed.), *Aesthetics* (London, 1957).
50. Fei-Pai Lu, *T.S. Eliot : The Dialectical Structure of His Theory of Poetry* (1966), p. 27.
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53. *The Poet's Self and the Poem* (London, 1976), p. 63.
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55. In a letter written to Paul Elmer More on 20 June 1934, Eliot expressed his need for a "more extensive and more profound knowledge of theology" and confessed that pure literary criticism no longer interested him. See Roger Kojecky, *Eliot's Social Criticism* (London, 1971), p. 78.

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56. *To Criticize the Critic*, p. 32.
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58. Ibid., p. 153.
59. *Selected Essays*, pp. 299, 145.
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62. *Selected Essays*, p. 289.
63. *Kavyalankara* 1/16.
64. *Kavyamimansa* (Baroda, 1916), p. 5.
65. *Sarasvatikanthabharana* (Calcutta, 1894), p. 58.
66. *To Criticize the Critic*, p. 170.
67. *On Poetry and Poets*, p. 101.
68. *Vakroktijivita* (Calcutta, 1961), p. 14.
69. Ibid., p. 12.
70. *Biographia Literaria* ed. J. Shawcross II, p. 19.
71. *To Criticize the Critic*. p. 172.
72. *On Poetry and Poets*, pp. 37—38.
73. *The Sacred Wood*, p. 57.
74. *On Poetry and Poets*, p. 29.
75. Ibid., p. 62
76. Ibid., p. 32.
77. *Kavyalankara* 6/24; 6/28.
78. *Kavyalankarausutravrtti* 5. i/13.
79. *For Lancelot Andrews* (London, 1970), p. 15.

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VIMALA RAMA RAO

THE CREATING SELF IN *A ROOM OF ONE'S OWN*: VIRGINIA WOOLF AND VLADIMIR NABOKOV

Chapter Six of *Speak, Memory* and the final chapter of *A Room of One's Own* have a special place in the canon of each writer. They deal with recurrent and pervasive interests of the two writers, butterflies in Nabokov and women's emancipation in Virginia Woof. Both books are autobiographical in a personal way but do not reveal the private person. In this sense, they are far removed from the Rousseau of the *Confessions*. What is revealed is a carefully orchestrated accumulation of detail which the writer presents as a finished artifact. This is self-conscious art, the writer aware of the self that he/she is creating through art and also of the processes of that creation.

Throughout the lectures that constitute *A Room of One's Own*, Virginia Woolf makes out a case for the lack of impressive artistic achievement by women in history. To her, the reasons are socio-economic, the lack of financial and social independence preventing women from taking an active role in the running of the world and the wide vistas that such activity throws open. In the final chapter of the book she draws upon all that she has earlier spoken of and enunciates her strong belief that the salvation of the world lies in the

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cooperation of the masculine and feminine principles, through the myth of the androgynous being which is her ideal.

Woolf is against the intrusion of the personality of the writer overshadowing the writing : "...after reading a chapter or two a shadow seemed to lie across the page. It was a straight dark bar, a shadow shaped something like the letter 'I' .... One began to be tired of 'I'... in the shadow of the letter 'I' all is shapeless as mist."[1] The self presented in a fiction must be one that is strictly subordinated to the purposes of art. The "I" of a fiction disporting himself uninhibitedly center stage is an entity that both Woolf and Nabokov frown upon. Consequently the self that they present in their fiction is one that has been meticulously crafted.

Yet, the fiction of Woolf and Nabokov is an affirmation of the self; through their fictions they are saying, "I create, so I am." A close look at the fiction and the process by which it is created reveals a great deal about the self that the writer is presenting to the reader and thereby affirms.

The fictional surrogate of Woolf, who is named Mary Beton in the book, is presented in the process of self-discovery in a confrontation with the masculine stronghold of Oxbridge. Every encounter and experience there confirms her hypothesis that leisure and private space are essential for the creation of art, specifically literature. She quotes Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch to support her thesis by his contention that the great names in poetry within the last century were, by and large, university men, "which means that somehow or other they procured the means to get the best education England can give....a poor child in England has little more hope than had the son of an Athenian slave to be emancipated into that intellectual freedom of which great writings are born."[2] Armed with the authority of a man's verdict, Woolf goes on to liken the underprivileged position of women to that of slaves. She is aware of the historical processes which led to the emancipation of women, bringing them into universities and into the great world at large. She urges women to "live in the presence of reality" saying that the writer has the chance to live more than other people in the presence of reality.

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The circumstances of Nabokov's life, in a way, are comparable to the predicament of women that Woolf discusses, in the sense of being outside the pale of active engagement in the affairs of the world. But in the case of Nabokov, historical necessity coincided and reinforced a conscious personal and artistic choice of isolation and exile. Yet, as a writer, he was in the unenviable situation of one whose familiar world and culture had vanished and whose audience was rapidly disappearing too. When Nabokov made the switch from the Russian language to English, in the beginning he was as uncertain of his reception there as any woman writer a century earlier could have been, even though English had been the ambience of his childhood and youth. At the time *Speak, Memory* was written, he was not yet a successful writer, but the later edition, in 1961, of *Speak, Memory : An Autobiography Revisted* was eagerly read by an audience curious to see if the author of *Lolita* had unlocked his heart in these memoirs. The Nabokov that one meets in these pages is the author of the well-known, intricately crafted novels that made him famous. The self that is presented in the book is that of Nabokov the writer, and no other. Childhood and youth are evoked vividly in terms of the experiencing self of the past but subjected to the overall pattern imposed by the creating self. The control exercised by the artistic self is signalled by the thematic patterns traced throughout the autobiography.

Chapter Six of *Speak, Memory* occupies a special place in the Nabokovian canon bringing together the two complementary sides of his personality, the scientist and the artist while the one is recreated by the other. Memory and imagination fuse together here and to Nabokov they were both a negation of time :

> I confess I do not believe in time. I like to fold my magic carpet, after use, in such a way as to superimpose one part of the pattern on the other....and the highest enjoyment of timelessness in a landscape selected at random is when I stand among rare butterflies and their food plants. This is ecstasy, and behind the ecstasy is something else which is hard to explain. It is like a momentary vacuum into which rushes all that I love. A sense of oneness with sun and stone.. A thrill of

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gratitude to whom it may concern-to the contrapuntal genius of human fate or to tenderghosts humouring a lucky mortal.[3]

The ecstatic sense of self experienced here is essentially a lonely one. The landscape is unpeopled and unremarkable to the average eye, except to a naturalist. The sense of oneness with sun and stone is almost cosmic in its affirmation yet somehow seems to preclude a sense of community. While in Woolf there is a constant awareness of the writer as a woman among women, here in Nabokov the self presented and affirmed is essentially a solitary one. The very same sense of the uniqueness of the individual and the experiential self extends to his definition of reality. In an interview for BBC television, Nabokov said :

> Reality is a very subjective affair : I can only define it as a gradual accumulation of information; and as specialization. If we take a lily, for instance, or any other kind of natural object, a lily is more real to a naturalist than it is to an ordinary person. But it is still more real to a botanist. And yet another state of reality is reached with that botanist who is a specialist in lilies. You can get nearer and nearer, so to speak, to reality; but you can never get near enough because reality is an infinite succession of steps.... [4]

Woolf's definition of reality is not so precious as Nabokav's :

> It would seem to be something very erratic, very undepedable-now to be found in a dusty road, now in a scrap of newspaper in the street, now in a daffodil in the sun. It lights up a group in a room and stamps some casual saying. It overwhelms one walking home beneath the stars and makes the silent world more real than the world of speech and then there it is in an omnibus in the uproar of Piccadilly. Sometimes, too, it seems to dwell in shapes too far away for us to discern what their nature is. But whatever it touches, it fixes and makes permanent. That is what remains over when the skin of the day has been cast into the hedge; that is what is left of past time and of our loves and hates. [5]

Woolf feels that the writer has the chance to live more than other people in the presence of this reality and that it is his-meaning her–business to collect it and communicate it to the rest of us. It is

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interesting to note that while Nabokov builds up his notion of reality around a lily, Woolf's takes in a group of people and an omnibus in Piccadilly as well. To both writers the creation of fiction is a clear affirmation of the experiencing self and its unique artistic vision. Nabokov stresses the subjective element to the verge of solipsism, the uniqueness of the individual consciousness. In Woolf, "the need of a world of men for me" in Robert Browning's phrase is clear. A room of one's own is a place where the sea-like surge of subjectivity could be walled off to achieve a measure of objectivity. One can draw the conclusion, not unwarranted, that Nabokov speaks from the vantage point of one whose sense of self is unassailable, whereas Woolf is urging women towards the attainment of a clear sense of the self.

The tone of the writer in each of these chapters and the details embedded in the writing, support this view. Nabokov is writing about a highly specialized branch of entomology, drawing upon his personal memory which has clear footholds in the precise scientific details with which he develops the narrative. This very precision helps the tracing of thematic motifs over the memories of a lifetime and sojourns in widely different times and climes. A specific impression is threaded and traced through time and space. Describing waking up on a sunny morning in his childhood in Russia, he writes : "The foliage of birches moving in the sun had the translucent green tone of grapes and in contrast to this there was the dark velvet of fir trees against a blue of extraordinary intensity, the like of which I rediscovered only many years later in the montane zone of Colorado".[6] The precision of the poet here is matched only by the passion of the scientist when he speaks of a particular species of butterfly which he pursued over forty years. A coveted butterfly had been caught and unscientifically imprisoned in a wardrobe in his childhood :

> On the following morning...my swallowtail, with a mighty rustle... then made for the open window and presently was but a golden fleck dipping and dodging and soaring eastward, over timber and tundra, to Vologda, Viatka and Perm, and beyond the gaunt Ural range to Yakutsk andVerkhne

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> Kolymsk...where it lost a tail, to the fair island of St. Lawrence, and across Alaska to Dawson, and southward along the Rocky Mountains to be finally overtaken and captured, after a forty-year-race, on an immigrant dandelion, under an endemic aspen near Boulder. [7]

Nabokov makes a reference to many a lepidopterist of distinction in this chapter, and quotes poets who have butterflies in their poetry but the butterflies which flit through this speech of memory, this private landscape are all Nabokov's own and the registering consciousness is the "I" of the beholder. The motif of butterflies also serves to clearly isolate the recording self from all other undeserving trespassers into that enchanted landscape :

> "None" calmly replied that sturdy Swiss hiker with Camus in his rucksack when purposely asked by me for the benefit of my incredulous companion if he had seen any butterflies while descending the trail where a moment before, you and I had been delighting in swarms of them. [8]

Surely, it is a separate reality that the lepidopterist-artist inhabited.

Virginia Woolf makes common cause with women of all time and suggests the possibility of a fine crop of writers from among their ranks should the highly desirable goals of a room of one's own and five hundred pounds a year be attained. Besides, she sees the creative fusion of the masculine and the feminine elements in the individual personality as well as in society as a prerequisite of harmonious development and creativity. The tone she employs is light and whimsical but earnestly meant. Nabokov dispenses with society and history altogether and demands of his audience tremendous efforts of empathy. As an artist, he stands alone with only literature and science as his backdrop. As this chapter illustrates, the fountainhead of an artist's creativity, to Nabokov, lies in his memory and imagination and art to him is a statement of one's position in relation to the universe. His engagement with lepidoptera isolated him radically : "One of them was the acute desire to be alone, since any companion, no matter how quiet, interfered with the concentrated enjoyment of my mania." [9]

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A room of one's own might, on occasion, accommodate another. A mania is surely the last stronghold of an uncompromising individualist in a free or fettered world.

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4. Nabokov, V. *Strong Opinions* (New York : McGraw–Hill Book Company, 1971), p. 10.
5. Woolf, p. 108.
6. *The Portable Nabokov*, p. 28.
7. Ibid., p. 29.
8. Ibid., p. 38.
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AMIN Z. RIZVI

HUMANISM IN *NOTES FROM UNDERGROUND* AND *THE FALL.*

Humanism is as we all know, a system in which man, his interests and development are understood to be the most important factors. Its tendency is to encourage a spirit of revolt – for this it exalts the practical and the cultural rather than the scientific and speculative. Today it is believed that man is the meaning for all things and, therefore, truth cannot exist nor have any meaning without human faculties and human requirements.

The overriding idea is quiet similar in the two novels. It is difficult to say how much Camus was indebted to Dostoyevsky. It is true he read, translated and even acted in some of his translated works but my aim is not to discover the influence of Dostoyevsky on Camus. It is simply to show how the two authors appropriate the synthesis of the problems of underground and double in human beings through humanism.

Notes From Underground (1864) and *The Fall* (1956) reveal the stories of two individuals in confrontation with stark humiliation and mockery of life. The lingering bitterness of degradation paves in them a cementing urge for ignoble revenge, because both are men of acute self-consciousness, extreme sensitivity and thorough awareness. Ultimately when they embark upon their final endeavors they find themselves face to face with the carious ugliness of their own

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discrepancies which rent them apart with debauchery. Shocked and confounded they even try to debate and argue with themselves about this conflicting phenomenon. Unable to overcome their anguish they carve for themselves a self-isolated life in which they turn in upon themselves, confessing their deformities, self-torture, they suffer the awareness of the best and the incapability of getting it and then they come to a conclusion of their own belief that the entire world is like them and it is no use to become better. The Underground man says, "... whose side to be on or where to give our allegiance, what to love and what to hate, what to respect and what to despise."[1] Clamence asks, "Are we not all alike for ever up against the same question for which we know the answer in advance?"[2]

The charming attractiveness is obviously found in the pathos which is dominant throughout the two novels, but what is more powerful is the unbreached voice of the two writers which perpetually develops into strength by the luxuriant tone of their enchanting message which is humanism, for it naturally brings into solidarity those who throb with life rich in feeling and sensation rather than thought and imagination. Dostoyevsky and Camus were both great exponents of 'hope' in man's existence. Camus was confident that if "hope in life is once reborn then God is powerless against human interest."[3] Both novels exalt revolt against existing opinion. The aspirations of Dostoyevsky and Camus grow delicately with grace with every revelation about man. The two intellectuals saw man not as a thing to dwindle away into oblivion, nor as a tragic source to perpetuate despair but as a complete force of pure dexterity, which undrlies his own 'allness' that goes to make him an unalloyed human comprising of total humanity. Kaufman claims, "This individuality is the highest good."[4] Dostoyevsky declared in his notebook that he was proud to be the first person to have portrayed the 'real man' of the Russian Majority which he said was tragic. Camus' faith in the individual was strengthened by seeing the tragic condition of the 'modern' man. He said, "Man is that force which ultimately always cancels tyrants and Gods. He is the force of evidence and human evidence is what we must preserve and our cer-

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tainty comes from the fact that there is something that still has meaning.." [5] and this meaning he found in man.

Incidentally the inception of these two novels also share a number of travails. For instance both novels are rancor reaction of ideologies unexpected and unacceptable to the two intellectuals on one hand and personal humiliation which both suffered on the other.

Dostoyevsky's *Poor Folk* (1846) was applauded by everyone including Belinsky as a big achievment. But his *The Double* (1846) did not receive even the slightest appreciation. Dostoyevsky's hurt pride and morbid state of health led him to fight with everyone including Belinsky. He was thus reduced from a promising writer of Russian Literature, to a mere laughing stock, mocked and scorned. Likewise Camus suffered humiliation in the hands of his friend, critic, and co-communist. Sartre's comments on Camus' The Rebel was that he was writing about things he did not understand. And that Camus had not read either Marx or Engeles and yet had utilised the ideas of communist philosophers. His other common friends too began to find inadequacy of philosophy in the book. Camus was hurt, shocked and suffered rejection. Apart from this Camus hated Russia whereas Sartre ever drifted towards it; Camus fought for principles which were different from Sartre's devotion to Socialism. Likewise Dostoyevsky too suffered a breach of faith and trust in Social Utopian after his arrest and imprisonment. In a letter to Eduard Ivanovich on March 24, 1856 he wrote, "I endured the hatred of my fellow convicts who revenged themselves on me...what caused me the greatest suffering was the fact that I came to understand my delusion..."[6]

Dostoyevsky and Camus became inevitably indulgent in the human condition also due to their own poverty. Camus wrote, "A certain number of years lived without money are enough to create a whole sensibility."[7] A little later he wrote again, "Poverty prevented me from thinking that all is well under the sun and history and the sun taught me that history is not everything".[8] On June 5, 1837 Dostoyevsky wrote to his father, "I suppose that now you are filling your lonely hours with running the estate and farming chores. And I

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wonder what this year will bring us and whether there will be much in it that will cheer us. Oh, may God send us happiness."[9]

The two writers wanted to save man from the cramps of despair, debauchery, nothingness and hollowness which became a general condition of his life. The Underground man says, "I was always conscious of many elements showing the directly opposite tendency. I felt them positively swarming inside me. These elements I knew had swarmed there all my life asking to be let out. But I wouldn't, I wouldn't. They tormented me and drove me to convulsions...' [10] Clamence says, " I don't know how to name the odd feeling that comes over me. Isn't it shame, perhaps ? ...or one of those silly emotions to do with honour. And that emotion has never left me... despite my digression and my inventive efforts." [11]

On June 9, 1838 Dostoyevsky wrote to his brother, " I have a plan to become a madman, let people become furious...its terrifying to find a man who has the inconceivable in his power and does not know what to do."[12] In the same letter he expresses his profuse ambition to discover what man is, "But to see only the hard shell in which the universe is languishing, to know that one single explosion of will would be sufficient to shatter it and fuse it with eternity, to know that and to be like the last creature – that is horrible.[13] Finally, on August 16, 1839 his solemn but silent decree was, "Man is a mystery it must be unraveled. If it takes a whole life time don't say it is a waste of time. I am preoccupied by this mystery because I want to be a human being.[14]

In *The Myth of Sisyphus* (1942) Camus has tried to explain this hollowness which suddenly erupts in man :

> I hold certain facts which I cannot separate. What I know and what is certain I cannot deny ... I can negate everything of that part in me which lives in vague nostalgias except this desire for unity, this longing to solve, this need for clarity and cohesion, this divine equivalence which springs from anarchy. I do not know whether this world has a meaning that transcends it. But I know that meaning and that it is impossible for me to know it. What can a meaning outside my condition mean to me. I can

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understand only in human terms. What I touch what resists that is what I understand.[15]

Because earlier in 1938 Camus' reaction after seeing the pathetic condition of man was, "The spirit of revolution lies wholly in man's protest against the human conditon... it's a protest which a man makes against his destiny."[16] And that is why he was very clear when he wrote, "There is no love of life without despair of life."[17] Dostoyevsky's prison experience of 1849 gave him a complete understanding of the real man. The convicts revealed to him what he needed, 'the allness' of man. On February 1854 he wrote to his brother, "Even in penal servitude I learned in those four years to discern human beings amongsts the bandits...some cannot fail to respect and others are admirable. I may not have seen Russia, but I got to know Russian people well".[18] *The Fall* like *Notes From Underground* conceals the dark and mysterious days Camus spent from 1954 to 1957. Isolated from his friends and society he suffered to discover the reverse of common decency which Rieux talks about in *The Plague* and like Clamence found out, "the keenest of human torments is to be judged without law".[19]

In his novel *What is to be done ?* published in 1863 Chernyshevsky wrote that if a man is enlightened, foresighted, critical and receptive of his own interests he can never be evil and become virtuous. But Undergroundman condemns its authenticity and says that men have known to have chosen opposite paths out of self will, defiance, obstinacy and even boredom knowing very well that it would lead to meaninglessness of life. And moreover in order to desire his will he has been known to go against all logic and laws of nature. This is perhaps why Raskolnikov commits murder in *Crime and Punishment*: "All theories of self-nterest, virtues and nobility are sophistry. Because man is so partial to systems and abstract deductions that in order to justify his logic he is prepared to distort the truth intentionally."[20] Clamence says in *The Fall*, "The feeling of the law the satisfaction of being right, the joy of self-esteem are powerful incentives to keep us upright or make us move forward. On the other hand if you deprive men of them you transform them into dogs forthing with rage. How many crimes were committed merely

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because their author could not endure to be wrong."[21] This is why Undergroundman says that if one looks around oneself one will find blood flowing everywhere in torrents as if it was champagne. "There's our nineteenth century—and it was Bukle's century too."[22]

Clamence mentions the killing of the Jews during the reign of Hitler. He says, "What a clean-up. Seventyfive Jews deported or assassinated, that's real vacuum cleaning. I admire that diligence and methodical patience ! When one has no character one has to apply a method...I am living on the site of one of the greatest crimes in history."[23] This severity against scientific methodology and speculative calculations is actually a never ending fight against human degradation which the Undergroundman feels obliged to share with his fellow-men through his 'Palace of Crystal', his certitude is that when common sense and science is re–educated then men on their own accord will cease to do crime and indulge in other follies and live a normal life by realizing the difference between the common sense and volition. Moreover laws of nature according to him cannot govern men. On the contrary men have to discover these laws in order to live in harmony with them. This is reflective in the 'Stone Wall' or the law of nature as the Undergroundman calls it. For him it is the conclusion of science and mathematics : "Because the law of nature does not ask for it. She is not concerned with your wishes or whether you like her laws or not. You must take her as she is and consequently her results". [24]

'Real life' for both Undergroundman and Clamence is servitude. "Just try giving us much independence as possible, untie the hands of anyone of us, loosen our bonds and we should I assure you beg to go back underdiscipline."[25] "At the end of all freedom is a court sentence, that's why freedom is too heavy to bear..." [26] and for this reason he (Clamence) calls himself an enlightened advocate of slavery. [27] Explaining this Camus says, "I demand for happiness and the patient quest for it. We need not banish our melancholy but we must destroy our taste for difficult and fatal things. Be happy with our friends in harmony with the world and earn our happiness by following a path which nevertheless leads to death...Always demand now but stay lucid."[28]

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This leads one to conclude that man is only a custodian of the two factors – underground and the double as he is a caretaker of the law of nature, common sense, lucidity and hope. If, therefore, he exercises his choice of free will, he is himself responsible for it. And responsibility according to Sartre is the "consciousness of being the incontestable author of an event or of an object". [29] This analysis can be further amplified by the example of Jesus Christ. Both Dostoyevsky and Camus had a very special understanding of Christ. Camus wrote in *The Myth of Sisyphus* : "Christ lived in the midst of falsehood and died for a falsehood. Solely in this sense Jesus personified the whole human drama. He is the complete man, being the one who realised the most absurd conditions...and like him each one of us can be crucified and victimised."[30] On 1st January, 1840 Dostoyevsky wrote to his brother, in which he says, "...Don't you realise that in the *Illiad* Homer gave to the world a scheme for spirititual and earthly life with the same force as Christ gave it to the modern world."[31] For Dostoyevsky, Christ was also a supreme example of truth which he has expressed in *Brothers Karamazov.*

If Clamence says, "Christ was crucified because he knew that he was not altogether innocent...he must have heard of a certain slaughter of the innocent. The children of Judea massacred while his Parents were taking him to a safe place – why did they die if not because of him. And when he grew up the knowledge of his crime innocent must have haunted him."[32] Clamence lays this claim because he cannot guarantee the validity of the values he has choosen for himself. He is apprehensive because each time he has to make a choice it is self he choses which is already in a disarray. It is completely distorted because it is in total disassociation with his past, present and his future. He says, "Life becomes less easy for me when body is sad, the heart languishes. It seemed to me I was half unlearning what I had never learned and yet it was probably then that every thing began...[33]

The concept of women also is miraculously alike in the two books. One is a fallen woman and another a woman who falls and dies. Both are representative figures of the times in which they lived. It is difficult to agree with Jessie Coulson when he says,

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"Dostoyevsky's Liza though belongs to real life; she is a human being, a young woman made of flesh and blood whose everyday existence began before and will continue after the part of her history... Her reality and truth reveal the hollowness of the Undergroundman and the falsity of his ideas....when she vanishes in the thickly falling snow, it is she who goes on."[34] But why should one forget and overlook the fact that Dostoyevsky has quoted Nekrasov's poem in the novel a number of times. It says :

Enter now then bold and free,
Be mistress of my house and me.

It is about repentant Magdelene who cries because she is heart broken. Her latest lover has humiliated, insulted and tortured her verbally. She feels defeated and appears like a criminal in front of her own conscience. After this carious suffering she feels purified and thus comes this poem. The Undergroundman's intentions are very clear. He humiliates Liza so that she would continue : "Isn't it better if she carries away with her now an everlasting wound to her pride ? Humiliation after all is purification. It is the acutest and the most vivid consciousness. Tomorrow I should have polluted her mind and wearied her heart...and now the insult will never die within her and however revolting the filth in store for her."[35] And then he asks whether cheap happiness is better or lofty suffering is better. Yes it is the Undergroundman who liberates Liza from the fallen life and Liza in her turn helps to give the Undergroundman a full understanding of himself.

Clamence says, "A certain type of pretension was so personified in me that it was hard for me to imagine despite the fact that a woman who had once been mine could ever belong to another. But the oath they wore to me liberated me while it bound them".[36] He confesses his sensuality. But his whole approach to life changes when a woman commits suicide while he was crossing River Seine. He heard her shriek and cry for help but he simply passed by and she died. The memory of the whole scene pricked his conscience and an imaginary laughter mocked his being and revealed to him a clear understanding of his hollowness. The realisation which came to him was : "God is not needed to create guilt or to punish. Our

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fellow-men suffice aided by ourselves". On May 18, 1959 Camus in a letter to Rene Char said, "The question is only to know what life at least is, what it contains that is worth adoring. Is to become that alone suffices to make one suffer? But if we are unhappy at least we are not deprived of truth".[37] And this truth is definitely not found in solitary tragedy alone but it is available in company and Clamence and the Undergroundman are never alone.

Both novels are aesthetically effective in their design and execution in analysing the secrets of man and laying them bare for wider understanding and deeper comprehension by exalting humanity through practical and cultural associations rather than through scientific and speculative ideals. Man is indeed the fountain head of all meaning of life and truth is void without human faculties.

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SABDA AND SOUND : A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE PHONIC FORM IN INDIAN AND WESTERN POETICS

One of the answers that George Orwell gave to his self-critical enquiry "Why I Write" was that he was interested in "... passages in which words were used partly for the sake of their sound".[1] Not only novelists like Orwell, but many poets also would have given the same answer if they had set out on a similar quest. But even critics like I.A. Richards whose sworn aim in literary criticism has been textual analysis, have not paid adequate attention to the phonic form of poetry. True, he says in his *Practical Criticism* that "half perhaps of the feeling that poetry carries comes through its form."[2] Despite the importance Richards attaches to "the movement of words in verse, "his comparative reticence in the matter makes Wetherill lament that "*Practical Criticism* devotes its shortest chapter to poetic form".[3] It is modern stylistics which, following the methodology of structuralist linguistics, has tried to assess systematically the "sound value" in literary works. All stylistic studies stem from the realization that every literary text is basically a linguistic fact. The phonetic features of vowels, consonants, syllables, their combinations, permutations, and special collocations determine the quality and content of the linguistic entity, the text.

In modern stylistics, Roman Jakobson's study of poetry within the competence of linguistics accounts for its distinction. Poetics, according to him, deals with the problem of verbal structure. Every use of language is "goal-directed" [4] and is "not the sole function of verbal art but only its dominant, determining function, whereas in

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all other verbal activities it acts as a subsidiary, accessory constituent".[5] Verbal sequences including metrical patterns, alliterations, rhymes, etc. which are, as Jakobson puts it, "the regular reiteration of equivalent units,"[6] give poetic use of language its special structure. It is order, pattern or formal organization which distinguishes literary language from other linguistic manifestations. A sweeping generalization is likely to mislead for it is not mere metrical patterning and other formal elements that make great poetry. But is can be said that though all formal linguistic compositions may not be poetry, all great poetry, inevitably has its structural pattern.

Power of Sound Patterns

Human beings had learnt the power of patterned sound even before they could distil out what is known as poetry from primitive speech. The hymns and the magical incantations of the primitives have the rhythmical and melodic qualities common to poetry. The Vedic Rishis had definite ideas about the sound effects of their hymns. The Rgvedic poets, P.V. Kane observes : "appear to have some ideas about a theory of poetics.... They are fond of the same letters or words which create an appearance of what is called *anuprasa* in later times...." [7]

The argument that poetry originated from magic is based on the fact that rhythmical features are shared by both magical chants and poetry. Making an interesting observation in this regard George Thomson quotes in his *Marxism and Poetry* one of the incantations collected by Malinovski on the Trobriand Islands. Its translation runs thus :

> It passes, it passes,
> The breaking pain in the thighbone passes,
> The ulceration of the skin passes,
> The big black evil of the abdomen passes,
> It passes, it passes.[8]

The subject is not poetical, but the passage has an incantatory effect which is the result of rhythm and repetition of identical sound units. Passages of this sort are, Thomson quotes Malinovsky, distinguishedd by "richness of phonetic, rhythmical, metaphorical and al-

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literative effects" and by "weird cadences and repetitions."[9] These repetitions help the bard or magical enchanter to assert what he wants to say with more power and effectiveness.

Conscious ordering for aesthetic delight is the distinguishing mark of the language of poetry. Poets achieve their desired ends through a series of ordering at phonological, lexical, syntactic and semantic levels. Rhythm, alliteration, rhyme and other repetitions confer a special power and meaning on language. The collocation of words and their sound and meaning create a new impact which is the result of special selection and combination of sounds into a pattern of contrasts and parallels.

Rhyme and Reason

All phonological patterns and verbal parallels are closely associated with meaning. Though Ben Jonson says that rhyme is "the rack of finest wits", modern poets have made ample use of it, freeing it from the rigours of rhetoric. The freedom that modern poets enjoy can be illustrated with an example from Robert Frost :

> One can see what will trouble
> This sleep of mine, whatever sleep it is.
> Were he not gone,
> The woodchuck could say whether it's like his
> Long sleep, as I describe its coming on,
> Or just some human sleep.
>
> ("After Apple-Picking", lines 37 – 42)

The passage has a freshness which is the result of combining speech rhythms, internal rhymes and the rhyming of unstressed syllables and particles. The importance of these rhymes and pattern, as Roman Jakobson makes it clear, is not in themselves :

> Although rhyme by definition is based on a regular recurrence of equivalent phonemes or phonemic groups, it would be an unsound oversimplification to treat rhyme merely from the standpoint of sound. Rhyme necessarily involves the semantic relationship between rhyming units ("rhyme-fellows" in Hopkins' nomenclature).[10]

Wetherill says, rhyme, onomatopoeia and meter are "constantly on

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the threshold of meaning where the poem is concerned".[11] Verbal parallelism says things twice or more over, so that "the expression hammers home the content."[12] Parallelism exists wherever there is at least partial correspondence between words as in the following lines of William Blake:

Bring me my Bow of buring gold !
Bring me my Arrows of desire !
Bring me my Spear ! O clouds, unflod !
Bring me my chariot of fire !

("Milton, A Poem", lines 9–16)

Various sorts of repetitive patterns may be present in one and the same passage, to constitue its special beauty and power. For example, we may analyse the following stanza from Coleridge's "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner."

Water, water everywhere
And all the boards did shrink
Water, water, everywhere
Nor any drop to drink

("Ancient Mariner," Part II, lines 37–40)

The rhythmic variations in this passage fall to a pattern. The first and third lines are identical : two trochaic feet are followed by one dactyl in each line. Similarly, the second and the fourth lines are identical and keep the iambic pattern. The two dactyls with their two unstressed syllables at the end of the first and the third lines help to create an impression of the wide expansiveness of water. The wonder at the realization of the ocean which does not spare a drop to satisfy the thirst is stressed by the opening trochees, and their effect increases in contrast with the regular iambs of the second and fourth lines. The third line is a verbatim repetition of the first line while the word "shrink" of the second line rhymes with "drink" of the fourth line linking the two.

The Poetic Sabda

The patterns of poetic language, it is evident, exist and thrive on their contrast with the rhythms of everyday speech. The language of daily social communication does not make conscious use of any

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measure or "meter". But the language of poetry observes certain "commensurable" "sequences"[13] based on the idea of equivalence and recurrence. The pattern created is one of interrelationships. As Wetherill puts it, "the pattern thus established leads to the foregrounding of semantic similarities".

It is inevitable, adds Wetherill, that "the precize nature of these sounds will vary not only from one poem to another but also from one language to another".[14] This observation seems to be correct when we compare the English phonological patterns with those of ancient Sanskrit poetry. Their critics had analytically studied the "poetic sabda" and formulated theories thereon. Already we have taken note of the importance given to sound in Vedic hymns. It is true that ancient Indian literary aestheticians assigned great value to poetic sentiments which produced *rasanubhava* (aesthetic enjoyment). But in their poetics, *alankarasastra* is divided into two major divisions : *sabdalankara* (figures of sound) and *arthalankara* (figures of sense). The oft-quoted dictum *sabdartha sahitau kavyam* (poetry is the togetherness of sound and sense) is an admission that poetry is inextricable from sound, the audible manifestation of language.

The concern of the early *alankarikas* with the figures of speech enabled them to be objective and empirical. Though they were concerned with the advantages of verbal arrangement with regard to sense, it was Kuntaka[15] who in his *Vakroktijivitam* conducted an objective and analytical study of the language of poetry, in many ways comparable to the methods of structuralist stylistics. He developed the concept of vakrokti, originally formulated by his predecessor Bhamaha, into a comprehensive theory of poetics. According to him the inseparability of sound and sense in literary language makes it a deviant form of utterance *(Vakrokti)*, different from the familiar and the ordinary use of language.

Kuntaka's detailed examination of "vakrata" (deviance) takes him to consider quite analytically the phonological patterns which give special power and beauty to poetic language. The first seven karikas of Chapter II of the text deal with *Varnavinyasa vakrat* a (deviance in the arrangement of syllables). *Varna* in Sanskrit means "letter", equivalent to a syllable. But in English, a letter is only a

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representation of a phoneme, and a syllable may be formed of as many as three or four phonemes. In effect Kuntaka's idea of *Varnavinyasa Vakrata* is similar to phonological deviation. The word *vinyasa* in the term makes it clear that Kuntaka's concern is with the pattern emerging from the deployment of syllables quite distinctively from the language of ordinary use.

Samuel R. Levin's idea of "deviation" comes very close to Kuntaka's concept in this regard :

> It can be shown that most, if not indeed all, of poetry's characteristic devices exemplify deviation in one way or another. Thus, to begin with, the use of conventions in poetry obviously lends itself to rationalization in terms of deviation, since the typography of a poem, its rhyme and rhythm, devices like assonance and alliteration, all deviate from the use or appearance of these same features in the language as used for ordinary purposes. (This is, of course, not to say that rhyme or alliteration, for example, may not appear in ordinary language discourses; it is simply that the systematic
>
> organization of these features in poetry represents a deviation in as much as they occur in the ordinary language in a random, non-systematic way). Turning to features more strictly linguistic, the phonology, for example, the syntax and the lexicon of poetry, it is evident that these features like-wise deviate from the way in which they find their expression in the ordinary language.[16]

Alliterative Pattern

Kuntaka expresses his idea of allieteration in Karika 1 (Chapter II) : "One, two or more syllables used again and again at short intervals constitue the three forms of art in the arrangement of syllables". The repetition of consonants can be in three ways : (1) Only one consonant closely repeated, (2) two consonants closely repeated; and (3) many consonants closely repeated. Two lines from Kuntaka's example may be quoted as specimen of alliterative patterning :

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dhammillo vinivesitalpakusumah saundaryadhuryam smitam vinyaso vacasam vidagdhamadhurah kanthe kalah pancamah.[17]

This is similar to the regular alliteration in Shakespeare :

Fair is foul and foul is fair
Hover through the fog and filthy air.

By the alliteretion of two or more consonats Kuntaka actually means the repetition of consonant clusters. The first two lines of the verse he uses as example are quoted here :

bhagnailavallarikastaralitakadali stambatambu ambu
Jambirastala tathisaralataralatalasika yasya Jahruh.[18]

This may be compared with the consonant clusters that we find in English poetry. For example, Donne speaks of

A *br*acelet of *br*ight hair about the bone

("A Relic", line 6)

or, Tennyson

I *sl*ip, I *sl*ide, I *gl*oom, I *gl*ance

("The Brook," line 41)

Kuntaka deals with another variety of "art in the arrangement of syllables" in Karika 2 (Chapter II) : "And consonants classified (i.e., "ka" to "ma" 25 in number) might combine with their nasals in alliteration; "ta", "la", "na", etc. might be doubled and reiterated; or the rest might become conjunct with "ra" etc. in alliteration. These also will shine by their harmony with the theme." Twenty five consonants from "ka" to "ma" of Sanskrit alphabet are called *sparsa* and they might combine with the nasal or fifth in each series, vis., "na" for purposes of alliteration. Also consonants like "ta", "la", "na" may be doubled and iterated. Other consonants may be alliterated when conjunct with "ra" etc. As example, two lines which Kuntaka quotes elsewhere may be noted :

etanmandavipakvavatinduka bhalasyamodaradura
prantham hantha pulindasundara sparsasamaksham laksyate[19]

Among the English poets, Hopkins, pursuing the technique of Old English versification, makes use of consonant clusters in alliteration. For example, the following lines from "That Nature is a Heracletean Fire and the Comfort of Resurrection" :

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Of ye*st*ertempe*st*s creases; in pool and rut peel parches
*Sq*uandering ooze to *sq*ueezed dough, cru*st* du*st*; *st*anches,
*st*arches

Kuntaka knew the power of consonantal alliteration in suggesting sentiments. It is not the limited "primary onomatopoeia" of words echoing sense (for example, words like "cuckoo", "whisper", "snore", etc.). Kuntaka seems to mean the "secondary onomatopoeia" of Stephen Ullmann which is the deft management of certain consonants in aid of sense. Ullmann says : "Onomatopoeia is a popular device in poetry, and there is remarkable consistency in the way certain sound-patterns are used for stylistic purposes in different languages".20 He cites as an example the use of the lateral consonant to produce an impression of softness. He quotes Keats's lines :

Wi*l*d thyme and va*ll*ey*l*ili*l*ies whiter sti*ll*
Than Leda's love, and caresses from the *rill.*

This is a common stylistic feature of all languages. Kuntaka while discussing the sweetness of the Middling Style *(Madhyama)* quotes the following verse which has a remarkable incidence of the lateral consonant:

velanilairmrudubhirakulitalakantha
gayanthi yasya carithanya paranthakantha
lilanathah samavalambya lathastharunam
hintalamalisu thatesu maharnavasya [21]

A skilful poet can produce suggestions of hardness/softness,thinness/sonority by managing the liquids and nasals (/1/, /r/, /n/ etc.), fricatives and aspirates (/v/, /f/,/s/, etc.) and plosives /p/, /t/, /k/, /b/, /d/, etc.) Thus Wilfred Owen creates a sense of the horror of war in the following lines :

What passing—bells for those who die as cattle
Only the monstrous anger of the guns
Only the stuttering rifles rapid rattle
Can patter out their hasty orisons

("Anthem for Doomed Youth", lines 1—4).

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Kuntaka takes note of this kind of consonantal alliteration to create a sense of harsh sentiment as in the following lines:

uttamyattalavaso pratapati taranavamsvintapatandrim
adridroni kutire kuharini harinaratayo yapyanti [22]

Kuntaka recognized the value of vowel variation in giving a new shade of alliterative beauty, as in ".....dhusarasariti....."[23]

In English poetry it is Hopkins who has made deliberate use of vowel variation in alliterative consonants, as in

This darksome burn, horse back brown
His rollrock highroad roaring down,
In coop and in comb the fleece of his foam
Flutes and how to the lake home

("Inversaid", lines 1 – 4)

or, as in

...upon, all on
two spools; part, pen, pack
Now her all in two flocks, two folds – black, white:
right, wrong; reckon but, rock but mind these two.

("Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves," lines 11 – 12)

According to Kuntaka the vakrata of poetic language could be produced by easy and effortless means. He doubts the sensibility of a poet who relishes only the repetition of euphonous words. He says, alliteration "if effected with downright craze and great labour, there will be loss to harmony with the intended meaning."[24] Among the phonological patterns which give speciality and strikingness to poetic language, Kuntaka includes "yamaka", rhyme produced by polysemic words. *Yamaka kavya* results from the repetitive use of words similar in sound but different in sense.

Polysemy is, says Stephen Ullmann, a "semantic universal inherent in the fundamental structure of language".[25] The frequency of polysemy varies from language to language depending on various factors. It is the highest technical achievement of Sanskrit poets that they made abundant use of it. Accepting it with reservations, Kuntaka maintains that it should be endowed with effortlessness, sweetness, and strikingness. Besides, the rhyming words

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should occur at specific places – the beginning, the middle and the end. Kuntaka does not detail its qualities because what he has already said about alliterative patterns is applicable to *yamak* too. It seems Kuntaka does not attribute to it any special significance except as one more instance of *varnavinyasa vakrata*.

It is true that modern literary criticism has begun to accept the value of the conscious psychic process in the poet which churns the chaotic linguistic mass – a value already recognized and effectively embodied by ancient Sanskrit literary critics, especially by Kuntaka. He holds the view that the poet measures out his language, ordering and patterning it. Thus *vakrata* is, according to Kuntaka, the result of patternal deviation – the hall-mark of poetic language. The poet, with his gift and craft, creates a new phonological structure which is striking semantically too.

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17. Vakroktijivitam, pp. 359 – 60. In the braid are laid a few flowers: and the smile irradiates loveliness. The utterance of words is skilled and sweet while the voice echoes the cuckoos note.
18. Ibid., p. 360. The langour of ladies in the army camp after a night of revelry in arbours on the seashore is removed by cool winds (they carry the scent of), the cardamom creepers broken by them, of the wild plantains, betels, jambo and lime trees shaken by them, etc.
19. Ibid., p. 63.
20. Stephen Ullmann, *Language and Style* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1973), p. 70.
21. Vakroktikjivitam, p. 65. The passage is translated on p. 351 as follows :

    On the shores of the mighty ocean,
    Studded with palm-groves,
    The belles on the west-coast
    Lean against shrubby trees,
    And sing his mighty deeds
    With curls waving in the gentle sea-breeze.
22. Ibid., p. 362. As the sun burns hot, the tigers that prey on the deer allay their fatigue due to the burning rays of the sun somehow with parched throats, lying quietly in their deep mountain lairs beside rills.
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THE *RAMAYANA* AND THE *AENEID* : SOME SALIENT FEATURES

Reading the Indian epic, the *Ramayana*, one is struck by its similarity to other epics, myths and legends in deeds, aspirations, beliefs, doubts and fears. One notices that the Epic, as a genre, though reflecting local particularities of a certain people, has general characteristics applicable to all individual epics. An epic poet not only describes the way of life of an historic people but also subsumes the whole realm of knowledge available in his age in the texture of his poem.

The *Ramayana*, an eastern epic, and the *Aeneid*, from the west, have several points in common. For the purpose of this paper, I am limiting myself to a comparative study of some of the leading characters in both of them.

The *Aeneid* was written in the heyday of the Augustan age. It exalts Augustus Caesar and glorifies the Roman people. But the *Ramayana* has, as its main concern, the religion and ethics of ancient India. Early in the *Ramayana*, Kosala is described as a virtuous society but internally threatened, in the characters of Kaikeyi and Kooni, by immoral traits, which have to be purged. Rama, the protagonist, has to undergo hardships and face difficulties before Kosala regains its earlier purity and virtue. Virgil's epic can be symbolically interpreted in terms of destruction and rebirth.[1] Ancient

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Italy, populated with a race of barbaric energy, has to be destroyed in order to give way to the emergency of a new race of people combining in themselves Aeneas' qualities of bravery, skill in the arts of war, wisdom and restraint.

The *Ramayana* can briefly be outlined as a fierce contest between the forces of goodness represented mainly by Rama, on the one hand, and on the other, those of evil led by the tenheaded Ravana, the chief of the asuras or demons and the ruler of Lanka, who, having been granted such extraordinary powers by the gods, misused them, became a dreadful tyrant, and lorded it over the whole universe. The crisis reaches its climax when Ravana kidnaps Sita, Rama's wife, to his stronghold in Lanka. So the *Ramayana* is in fact a tale of daring adventures, love and war. The *Aeneid* can also be summed up along similar lines, for it deals with Aeneas' earlier adventures in Troy, his passage in the sea on his way to Italy, his love affair with Queen Dido of Carthage, and his war with Turnus and allies.

The *Aeneid* has, for its main aim, the foundation of a new empire at the hands of its hero. To achieve it, Aeneas has to fight it out with Turnus before winning Princess Lavinia. The *Ramayana*, too, has the destruction of the asuras as its principlal goal. To bring it about, Rama and Ravana fight for Sita. The difference between the fights-for-love in the two epics is that Rama and Sita are already married while Turnus and Lavinia are not. Also, Sita is wholly devoted to her husband and heroically resists her abductor who attempts to coerce her into submission, while Lavinia is depicted as completely passive and indifferent to the outcome of the war.

The heroes of these two epics are analogous, in some respects, to one another. The hero of the *Aeneid*, similar to Gilgamesh and Achilles, has a goddess, Venus, for a mother. He is also a typical epic hero for he is a human who can claim descendancy from the gods. Rama, though similar in one sense, is different in another, for He is no less than the supreme god incarnate, and in this sense nearer to Christ in the Christian creed. Yet, having the almighty as the hero of an epic could be a disadvantage for he cannot experience human feelings such as fear, distress or grief.[2] However, in Rama's case, he

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is made oblivious of his divine nature, and as such his actions are, on the whole, convincingly human. He suffers the pangs of love, is exiled, and apparently commits a moral error in killing Vali who has done him no harm. He is even deceived by Mareecha who assumes the form of a golden deer and manages to lure him away, paving the way for Ravana to abduct Sita. In line with human limitation, he is also subject to moods of depression, as happens after the temporary loss of his wife. And as such, he is even more convincingly portrayed as subject to human frailty than either Aeneas or Achilles.

The physical beauty of Rama and Aeneas is dwelt upon in both works. Rama's physical beauty, with its immediate effect on Sita, is referred to in Chapter Two entitled "The Wedding". Sita is so charmed by his looks and bearing that she cannot sleep or rest. Soorpanaka, Ravana's sister, suffers also from similar pangs and is bent on seducing Rama when she meets him at Panchavati. Similarly, Aeneas' beauty is described on his first meeting with Dido in the first book of the *Aeneid*, where Virgil tells his readers:

> His mother goddess, with her hands divine,
> Had formed his curling locks, and made his temples shine,
> And giv'n his rolling eyes a sparkling grace
> And breath'd a youthful vigor on his face.[3]

Like Sita and Soorpanaka, Dido is greatly impressed by Aeneas' appearance and by his fame, and, like them, she too becomes intoxicated with love :

> Sick with desire, and seeking him she loves,
> From street to street the raving Dido roves.
>
> (*Aeneid*, p. 90)

As Rama's physical beauty sends Sita and Soorpanaka into states of hallucination, so does Aeneas' to Dido who

> when ev'ry guest is gone
> Sits on the bed he press'd, and sighs alone;
> Absent her absent hero sees and hears.
>
> (*Aeneid*. p. 91).

The hero, in each of the two epics has a mission to achieve which in both epics is pre-ordained. In the *Aeneid*, Aeneas is des-

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tined by Fate, or Jove, to found a new empire, despite all obstacles set up in his way by Juno, Jove's sister wife, who when the Trojan fleet sails safely and smoothly from the Sicilian shores, bursts out in frustration :

> "Then am I vanquish'd ? must I yield ? " said she,
> "And must the Trojans reign in Italy ?
> So Fate will have it, and Jove adds his force;
> Nor can my pow'r divert their course."
>
> (*Aeneid*, p. 10)

In the Ramayana, too, Vasishta's flashback of Vishnu's decision to incarnate as Dasaratha's son in order to destroy Ravana and his evil tribe, reveals Rama's mission. Sage Viswamithra also gives testimony to Rama's greatness and thus addresses him: "O great one, you are born to restore righteousness and virtue to mankind and eliminate all evil".[4] More than once, Rama's preordained mission in vanquishing evil forces is underlined, as in Sita's meeting with the disguised Ravana when she tells him: "My lord's mission in life is to rid this life of them (i.e. the asuras) and establish peace on earth." (*Ramayana*, p. 92)

However, preordination does not negate human will and choice.[5] To accomplish his mission successfully and achieve the aim he is destined for, the hero goes through a series of adventures and meets with hardships. Aeneas loses his wife and his father dies. On his way to Italy, he is cast on several shores and faces surprising experiences. His father Anchises, old and experienced, warns him off Charybdis and Scylla, which have earlier caused havoc to Odysseus' ships and destroyed some of his ablest men.

Rama, too, loses his father and his wife is deceitfully abducted. He also has to experience the bitter taste of bloody adventures. Early in the epic, Rama has to contend with Thataka, who is described by sage Viswamithra as "a woman fierce, ruthless, eating and digesting all living creatures, possessing the strength of a thousand mad elephants" – (*Ramayana*, p. 11) – a description which reminds the reader of the Cyclops in the *Odyssey*, Book IX, and which is also mentioned in the *Aeneid*, Book III. But while Aeneas and his companions have to flee for their lives, as Odysseus

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has earlier done, Rama is so strong and powerful at using weapons that he manages to break Thataka's theree-pronged spear into fragments and pierces her threat with his arrow, thus putting an end to her evil career.

The resourceful heroes of epics are often drawn against military campaigns and fearful battles from which they emerge victorious, as in the cases of Aeneas and Rama. The hero, in both epics, plays the role of an army commander. Reaching Italy's mainland, Aeneas is faced with the opposition of some natives. Turnus, who has his eye on both Lavinia and the throne, finds in Aeneas a formidable rival. Subsequently, he is able to prevail in King Latinus' council and declares war on the Trojans. Aeneas, supported by some local forces, manages to repul Turnus' attacks. Rama, too after the kidnapping of Sita, realizes the necessity of marshalling armed forces against Ravana's stronghold to rescue his wife. With the support of Sugreeva and Hanuman, a huge army is formed. It builds, with the combined efforts of its members, a passage, marches on it and lands on the soil of Lanka.

Both Rama and Aeneas are not only army generals; they are also depicted as shrewd politicians and contrasted with Ravana and Turnus in either epic. In the *Ramayana*, both Rama and Ravana are shown holding their separate councils to make preparations for military campaigns. Thus, after the destruction of Lanka's capital, caused by the flying monkey Hanuman, Ravana calls his brothers, relatives and counsellors to a meeting to seek their views concerning action against Rama and his supporters. The council of the asuras is followed by and contrasted with another held by Rama. Ravana's council reflects his selfish designs and dictatorial attitude while Rama's brings out his nobility and deep insight into matters of importance.

Aeneas and Turnus, too, each with his allies, are shown in separate meetings. In King Latinus' palace, a council is held but the participants are divided amongst themselves. Ambitious Turnus presses for resumption of war against the intruding Trojans, while the king, supported by Drances and others, advises peace—a stand which forces Turnus, in Book XII, to concede the idea of seeking

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single combat with Aeneas. The latter is also shown in council with old Evander, the Arcadian King, asking politely and persuasively for support against the Latins who have turned against them.

Furthermore, the debates in Ravana's and King Latinus' councils shed more light on the leading participants since, in each, a conflict emerges between them. In Lanka, Vibishana, Ravana's younger brother, emerges as his chief opponent for he does not approve of his brother's dastardly behaviour in abducting Sita and keeping her against her will. In Italy, too, Turnus is opposed by Drances who charges him of haughtiness, ambition and insolence, and asks him to seek out his rival and fight him. However, the debate in the Italian council turns out to be one between rivals contending for leadership, but in Lanka the situation is different, for Ravana's position is secure and no one from among the asuras can really challenge and remove him.

In both the *Ramayana* and the *Aeneid*, there are several points of similarity concerning the final fight between the protagonists. In both works, trumpets are blown just before the fight starts. In the Ramayana:

> Ravana blew his conch and its shrill challenge reverberated through space. Following it another conch, called "Panchajanya", which belonged to Mahavishnu (Rama's original form before his present incarnation), sounded of its own accord in answer to the challenge, agitating the universe with its vibrations. And then Matali picked up another conch, which was Indra's and blew it. This was the signal indicating the commencement of the actual fight.
>
> (*Ramayana*, p. 154)

Similarly in the *Aeneid*, and while Aeneas is on his visit to Evander discussing preparations for the war, the poet says:

> Thrice forky lightning flash'd along the sky
> And Tyrrhene trumpets thrice were heard on high.
>
> (*Aeneid*, p. 218)

Both Rama and Aeneas are shown as the recipients of supernatural aid. The gods, in the *Ramayana*, realizing that on the result

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of the decisive battle between Rama and Ravana hinges their fate, send Rama Indra' s special chariot driven by Matali. Aeneas, too, is given supernatural assistance by his mother, Venus, who requests Vulcan to make her son arms and a mysterious shield. His adversary, Turnus, too is not left without supernatural aid, for his sister, Juturna, comes to his help and, on hearing his call,

> Forc'd from the beam her brother's charioteer,
> Assumes his shape, this armor, and his mien,
> And, like Metiscus, in his seat is seen.
>
> (*Aeneid*, p.p. 335–36)

Thus, both Rama and Turnus are sent supernatual charioteers. But in the latter's case, Juturna, acting against the god's will, fails in her mission.

In the description of the fight, in each of the two epics, there are some interesting details which draw one's attention. In either work, Ravana and Turnus are shown in tight positions, from which their lives are spared until another day when they finally fall to their foes. For, in the *Ramayana* and during the siege of Lanka, Ravana feels broken down when the news of the death of his commander-in-chief reaches him and decides to go and fight it out with Rama. In this earlier encounter between the main combatants, the narrator says :

> Ravana was sorely wounded, his crown was shattered, and his chariot was broken. Helplessly, bare-handed, he stood before Rama, and Rama said, "You may go now and come back tomorrow with fresh weapons". For the first time in his existence of many thousand years, Ravana faced the humiliation of accepting a concession, and he returned crestfallen to his palace.
>
> (*Ramayana*, p. 147)

In the *Aeneid*, Book IX, the reader is told that Turnus, like 'a fierce tiger', rushes into the Trojan town and is shut in there. Though he at first inflicts heavy losses on his enemies and strikes terror into their hearts, he soon realizes that he is outnumbered. He feels so exhausted that he cannot withstand the weight of his shield, grows

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weak and breathes heavily. Just before he is overpowered he jumps into the river and swims to safety.

On the other hand, both Rama and Aeneas are either seriously wounded during the fight or swoon on the battlefield. Aeneas, trying to save the shaky truce with the Latins, plunges amidst his men ordering them to desist from fighting, but is struck by an arrow. No mortal man, not even his clever physician, can heal his wound. His cure is left to his goddess mother who

> Temp'ring the mixture with her heav'nly hands,
> And pours it in a bowl, already crown'd
> With juice of' me c'nal herbs prepar'd to bathe the wound.
> The leech, unknowing of superior art
> Which aids the cure, with this foments the part;
> And in a moment ceas'd the raging smart.
> Stanch'd is the blood, and in the bottom stands :
> The steel, but scarcely touch'd with tender hands,
> Moves up, and follows of its own accord,
> And health and vigor are at once restor'd. (*Aeneid,* p. 334)

Rama and Lakshmana also face a similar situation when Indrajit, Ravana's son, attacks them with serpent darts; they faint on the battlefield. They are restored to consciousness only when the effect of the venomous darts is neutralized by supernatural means.

A contrast can also be drawn between Rama and Aeneas, on the one hand, and Ravana and Turnus, on the other. While the former are depicted as calm and composed, and on the whole in control of their feelings, the latter are not. After the fall of Camilla, Mezentius and a host of other heroes, whose death foretells in a way the imminent downfall of Turnus, the latter feels rather desperate. And when the Latins flee the field, the poet, in one of his great epic similes, describes his state :

> As, when the swains the Libyan lion chase,
> He makes a sour retreat, nor mends his pace;
> But, if the pointed jav'lin pierce his side,
> The Lordly beast returns with double pride :
> He wrenches out the steel, he roars for pain;
> His sides he lashes, and erects his mane :

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So Turnus fares; his eyeballs flash with fire,
Thro' his wide nostrils clouds of smoke expire.

(*Aeneid*, p. 319)

Turnus is of fiery temper, and, more than once, is associated with fire, as in the following :

Thus while he raves, from his wide nostrils flies
A fiery steam, and sparkles from his eyes.
So fares the bull in his lov'd female's sight :
Proudly he bellows, and preludes the fight;
He tries his going horns against a tree,
And meditates his absent enemy;
He pushes at the wind; he digs the strand
With his black hoofs, and spurns the yellow sand.

(*Aeneid*, p. 323)

He is not only in a fiery mood; he is depicted as an angry bull. He has lost control of his senses in the presence of Lavinia.

Ravana, too, is similarly described. The death of his commander-in-chief, his son Indrajit, his brother Kunbakarna, and lastly Mahodara, the staunchest of his supporters, is a foretaste of his own death. The ominous news reaching him from the battlefield makes him restless. Viewing his destroyed city from a tower, he feels "a terrific rage rising within him". (*Ramayana*, p. 151). His behaviour during the last combat betrays his despair. Watching him, Rama remarks to Matali, "Ravana is in a rage; let him perform all the antics he desires and exhaust himself" (*Ramayana*, p. 153). Also during his fight with Rama, realizing that all his military tactics prove fruitless, as the reader is told, "Ravana's anger was roused to a mad pitch ..." (*Ramayana*, p. 157). Being desperate, he becomes angry even with his charioteer.

Towards the end of the fight over Lanka, and in desperation, Ravana, the reader is told, begins to "throw on Rama all sorts of things, cast-iron balls, heavy rocks, and oddments he could lay hands on" (*Ramayana*, p. 159). This is a reminder of what happens in *Paradise lost*, Book VI, in which both angels and rebel angels hurl rocks, hills and mountains at each other. It is also similar, in a way, to what happens in the *Aeneid*, when Turnus, on the last leg of his

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fight with Aeneas, and deprived of all his weapons, spots a huge stone

> So vast that twelve strong men of modern days
> Th' enormous weight from earth could hardly raise.
> He heav'd it at a lift, and, pois'd on high,
> Ran stagg'ring on his enemy,

(*Aeneid*, pp. 350 – 51)

but, unlike the supernatural beings in the *Ramayana* and *Paradise Lost*, Turnus' shaking arms and knees fail him and the stone drops down.

At the end of the two epics, both Ravana and Turnus meet their death at the hands of their worthier and more righteous adversaries. Having rebelled against the gods and even humiliated some of them, Ravana tastes of the bitter fruits of his actions. His lust for Sita and abduction of her are a stain on his honour – which is blotted out by his own extinction. But Turnus' actions are not of the same dark nature as that of Ravana's. True, the Latin protagonist is ambitious; yet, he may be defended on the grounds of his love for Lavinia, and, more important, his stand against alien forces laying their feet on his motherland. However, he cannot be completely excused because in opposing Aeneas' marriage with King Latinus' daughter, he is acting against the gods and what is ordained by them.

Unlike Achilles, who commits an act of insensible outrage on the dead body of Hector, both Aeneas and Rama feel compassion for their fallen enemies. [6] Aeneas, for a few moments, hesitates to deal his opponent the last deadly blow :

> In deep suspense the Trojan seem'd to stand
> And, just prepar'd the strike, repress'd his hand.
> He roll'd his eyes, and ev'ry moment felt
> His manly soul with more compassion melt,

(*Aeneid*, p. 352)

until he spies Pallas' golden belt glittering on Turnus' side.

Rama, too, feels awed at the dead Ravana's transformed face which has shed off its layers of "dross, the anger, conceit, cruelty, lust, and egotism which had encrusted his real self" (*Ramayana*, p.

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159), and now his face glows with a new quality. The noble hero then gives orders to his followers :

> Honour him and cherish his memory so that his Spirit may go to heaven where he has his place. And now I will leave you to attend to his funeral arrangements, befitting his grandeur.
>
> (*Ramayana*, p. 160)

The two epics surprisingly abound in similarities. However, cultural differences between the East and the West find their reflection in the portraits of Rama and Aeneas. Rama, from the very beginning of the epic, is shown as the epitome of 'dharma' which simply means righteous conduct. In his character he unifies all scattered references to the morality of his time. He is a highly moral person whose reason is in control, keeping passion within decent bounds. In his devotion to his father, to his wife, and to duty, he is the embodiment of the Hindu religious and ethical ideals. Unlike western heroes, Rama is portrayed as quiescent and rather passive when Kaikeyi informs him of the two promises made earlier by Dasaratha to her. But this trait of quiescence is part and parcel of his strong sense of duty and filial obedience.[7]

Aeneas is differently depicted because his character undergoes deep changes. [8] While still in Troy, he is shown as impetuous and thoughtlessly passionate. He disobeys Hector's ghost which tells him that Troy's glorious days have come to an end and advises him to flee, but Aeneas fails to heed the warning. Before arriving in Carthage, it is his father who often takes the initiative. But with his visit to his dead father in the underworld, he is greatly transformed. From now on, he assumes his role as the sole leader who guides his men wisely and courageously. In war, we see in him 'Bellona's bridegroom' as well as the maker of peace. Unlike Turnus, reason and rationality characterize Aeneas' behaviour.

Another feature, reflecting on eastern and western morals, is spotted out in Rama's and Aeneas' responses to female strangers. For in the woods of Panchavati, the reader is informed, Rama is sexually tempted by Soorpanaka who is disguised as a damsel of ut-

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most beauty and tries to seduce him. However, she is, gently at first and rudely afterwards, repulsed by him and his moral integrity is thus kept intact. Aeneas, on the other hand, has no such moral scruples. When he reaches Carthage and Dido, symbol of unrestrained sensuality, falls in love with him, he gives in to her sexual advances. His mistake in Carthage does not lie in the sexual relationship he has with Dido but in dallying with her.[9] Jove, the Thunderer, has to send Hermes with a message chiding Aeneas for lingering in the Libyan land.

Although the *Ramayana* and the *Aeneid* belong to two completely different cultures, they are strikingly similar to each other on several accounts. In both works, war, adventures and love are outstanding themes, raising the reader's curiosity, enriching his imagination, and effectively influencing his sensibilities. Pre-ordination is a common element in either work; however, it does not negate free human will. The protagonists have several features in common.

Although both Rama and Aeneas are either partly or wholly supernatural, they are convincingly depicted as human beings. Both are shown as highly skilled army generals who lead their men to victory, as well as shrewd politicians who can wittily out-manoeuvre their adversaries. In the course of fight, similarities also arise, for both, faced by great enemies, react in like manners: both, in tight or awkward positions, are helped out by supernatural agents.

Yet, it is noticeable that the religious and moral aspects of the *Ramayana* are more prominent and receive much more emphasis, for Rama is presented as the incarnation of the supreme god and the embodiment of 'dharma'. The Indian epic is mainly concerned with religious and ethical issues; it tells of a universal struggle between the forces of good and those of evil. Kosala has to be purged of immoral traits reflected in shades of thinking found in Kaikeyi and Kooni.

Rama and Aeneas, standing for the East and the West, are distinct from each other. Unlike Aeneas who does not initially heed the advice of Hector's ghost, Rama has great respect for his stepmother,

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Kaikeyi, and submissively goes into exile. The two heroes also react differently to sexual temptation. However, the character of Rama does not show much development or change, unlike that of Aeneas who gradually emerges out of his relative inaptitude and develops into a great hero.

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ANIRUDH P. TRIVEDI

INTERVIEW WITH DENNIS LEE (TORONTO 28.9.1990)

> Being a citizen is hard, Lee tells us; love is hard, he also tells us. Being alive and having to look at yourself in the mirror in painful. But when all of this is accepted and lived with, it is possible to affirm your right to be here and state your case. Lee states this with unique eloquence.
>
> —Robert Fulford, Toronto Star

Dennis Lee was born is Toronto on 31 August 1939. He was educated at Victoria College in the University of Toronto and taught English literature there from 1963 to 1967. He also taught at the Rochdale Cooperative and York University. In 1967 Lee, with Dave Godfrey, founded the House of Anansi Press which changed the shape of Canadian publishing and became the nucleus of a group of young writers, including Margaret Atwood, Matt Cohen, Graeme Gibson and Michael Ondaatje. He also became an influential editor with Anansi. At present, he lives in Toronto and devotes all his time to writing.

His first collection of poems, *Kingdom of Absence* appeared in 1967. Lee's central concern in this book is the futility about the modernist role of the poet and the primacy of the void in modern life. His second book, *Civil Elegies*, a sequence of poems that reflects his intense feelings about the public responsibilities of the

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individual, appeared in 1968. In revised form, *Civil Elegies and Other Poems* (1972) won a Governor General's Award for poetry. His next three long poems, *Not Abstract Harmonies But* (1974), *The Death of Harold Ladoo* (1976) and *The Gods* (1978), represent an experiment with a new poetic voice. His first important critical work, an essay "Cadence, Country, Silence : Writing in Colonial Space", was published in 1973, which speaks about the need for a Canadian identity in colonized existence deeply affected by modernist values. *Savage Fields : An Essay in Literature and Cosmology*, published in 1977, is Lee's next important critical work, a scholarly study of Michael Ondaatje's *Collected Works of Billy the Kid* and Leonard Cohen's *Beautififul Losers*. *Wiggle to the Laundromat* (1972), *Alligator Pie*, (1974), *Nicholas Knock and Other People* (1974), and *Garbadge Delight* (1977) are children's poems which have earned Lee numerous awards.

At the centre of Lee's works is a struggle with modernism; throughout one important theme seems to resound and echo : "The search for moral and philosophical roots in an increasingly secular world... a quest for the intimations of the sacred..."

LEE INTERVIEW, Segment 1 :

Q : Mr. Lee, you have gained recognition as one of the leading contemporary Canadian poets, who has made significant contributions to the shape of English Canadian writing in the past twenty-five years. The major task for such a poet is to define himself, his creative role.

A : I think I know what you mean. But from the inside it feels a bit different. Let me tell you a story.

When I first started giving readings, there would always be questions afterwards. One of the favourites was, "Do you write for yourself, or for your audience ?" And I could never answer, because neither choice felt right. It was embarrassing. Eventually I realised: I don't write for readers, *or* for myself. What I write for is the poem

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that's trying to come into existence. I'm obsessed with the amazing rhythm that's itching to happen more cleanly in the third line. Or the overall gesture of feeling that starts flowing in the sixth line and wants to carry through for twenty more, but doesn't feel *there* yet. That's what tugs me along, and makes me put up with the preposterous amount of work it takes me to get a poem right–the scores, even hundreds of drafts.

In other words, the original question was wrong. If I accepted its terms, I was going to falsify what I knew. And it's the same when you ask about "defining my creative role. "It feels too abstract somehow, removed from what I know about the experience of writing. Could you come at the question differently ?

Q. I would like yot to throw some light on the tradition and milieu at the time when you started writing. I mean your development as a poet, your artistic vision and the shaping influences.

A : Well, I was born in 1939. So in 1960 I was 21, in the middle of my undergraduate years at the University of Toronto, and starting to suspect that making poems was what I was going to do with my life. In a vacillating, insecure way, mind you; at the end of the fifties in Canada, writing poetry was about on a par with making paper dolls, as a career choice.

In fact, "Canadian literature" was not something we took seriously at all. I assumed the tradition I belonged to was the British one, set in the larger context of Europe–with the American tradition being a kind of second home. That was the literary universe as it was taken for granted by most English Canadians in 1960. Apart from the United States, there wasn't a single non-European country on the map at all–including my own ! A few years later, the challenge would be to colour in the rest of the map, starting with where I lived. That was the homework for my generation of literary nationalists, in the sixties. But before it dawned on me, I was just chugging ahead with the Great Authors–the masters like Shakespeare and Milton and Tennyson, and then Yeats and Pound and Eliot and the rest.

So trying to find my voice was pretty confusing, because sub-

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liminally I thought the point was to be an Englishman. Or an American. When I started to get inklings of my own voice later in my twenties, the first thing I had to do was un-learn the colonial assumptions.

Q : So you mean at that time there was no Canadian literary tradition as such.

A : Well there was, but it was derivative-like the tradition in any other colony, before an authentic indigenous voice emerges. Canadian writing was not in synch with itself, it was still trying to work within the imaginative models of the metropolitan centre.

Mind you, there had been some good colonial writers during our first century. There'd been good poets, to speak of my field. But by 1960 there was still no native poetic tradition with a momentum of its own, and no first-rank poet who was English Canadian. The closest was Irving Layton. By 1970, you had to add Margaret Avison and Al Purdy–and Purdy really did become a major poet, to my mind. But when I was starting, most of what was praised in our tradition was simply decent colonial verse : either late-Victorian stuff, or recycled modernism.

So there was a general sense of cultural inferiority, even shame. For instance, as far as I know there wasn't a single course in Canadian literature given anywhere in the country at that time. At the University of Toronto, what we got was one or two Canadian novels–tacked onto the end of an American literature course. That was how we took the measure of the entire literature of our country; we saw ourselves as a minor, embarrassing footnote to the Americans. Then later in the sixties, when a few people started to say, "We should be studying the literature of our own place too," the mere idea was pooh-poohed. You know ? Professors would say, "We want students to read good literature; by definition that rules out anything Canadian." And one's worst fear was that perhaps they were right; may be Canadians *were* innately tenth-rate.

We've moved beyond those hang-ups, mainly because Canadians have written work of stature by now. But it's been a

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wrestle, and it's one that every country with a colonial legacy has to go through.

Q : What would vou like to say about the literary influences on you?

A : The most important have been a German poet, Friedrich Holderlin, and the classical Greek poet Pindar (whom I read only in translation). Holderlin isn't that widely known; he lived around 1800, and the best person to compare him with is Rilke, the German poet of the early twentieth century. But to my mind Holderlin was far greater.

Among living poets. I've probably learned most from the Canadian I mentioned, Al Purdy. Reading him was the first time I recognized an authentic voice rising out of who we are. And I also learned a lot about–oh, lining a poem on the page, fairly technical things which make it possible to move around comfortably in a voice that's conversational, but can rise into eloquence too. My work doesn't sound like Purdy's, but he was a major catalyst.

Recently I've been influenced by listening to music–especially jazz saxophone – more than by reading poetry. But that's a whole different thing, and it's hard to find a language to talk about the way it works.

LEE INTERVIEW, Segment 2 :

Q : Your first serious work, *Kingdom of Absence* (1967), seems to deal predominantly with the idea of futility and meaninglessness in human affairs. One critic suggests that you got this idea from the postwar confrontations with "nothingness" of the European existentialist philosophers. What is your reaction to this remark ?

A : Well, it's true that I'd read some of the existentialists; and it's also true that I had a sense of futility about Western civilization. But did I "get that idea" from reading the existentialists ? I don't think so, though who knows ?

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Don't forget that I was a very young man, trying to do a kind of writing I wasn't ready for. *Kingdom of Absence* is not a good book. It's the work of a young intellectual who hadn't learned...I didn't know how to write meditative poetry. I *am* a meditative poet, apart from the childern's work. But I didn't know that. So I wrote these short, tight-assed little pieces, chock-full of half-digested notions. Each poem in *Kingdom of Absence* is only 10 to 15 lines :for a poet like me, that's nutty. It was only in the next book, *Civil Elegies*, that I discovered I should be writing more expansively, with a longer line, a different kind of breathing, so to speak, and the whole poem free to move around much more. And beyond that, I had to learn to write with my whole body and heart and spirit, not just with my mind. I spent five years on *Kingdom of Absence* writing in a way that was altogether wrong for me, and now I look back and ask, "What was I *doing* ?"

Q : Some critics, on the other hand, discovered in you a sort of Canadian Matthew Arnold, painfully conscious of the loss of faith in God and human values, of discontinuity with the past.

A : That's a fair comparison. Though it's misleading in one way. At a certain point Arnold had to choose between continuing to grow as a poet, and doing what he eventually went and did, which was to become a school inspector. So he put his mature passion and energy into social service, and social criticism. For which I respect him. But it meant that he disengaged as a poet in some basic way. If you took away his one great poem, "Dover Beach," I don't know how much interest we'd have in the rest of his work.

But by 1860 or 1870, there was urgent new ground to break in poetry. Partly in content, but even more in what a poem could *be*. The possibility of ecstasy. I don't think Matthew Arnold knew very much about ecstasy in a poem—or even more fundamentally, about the poem *as* a mode of ecstasy. So it was Whitman and Hopkins who made the crucial breakthroughs, not Arnold (or Tennyson or Browning or Swinburne).

Of course there's a beautiful, grave sadness in "Dover Beach,"

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along with the wrestle with the death of traditional faith; and it's partly the melancholy in my early work that made critics think of Arnold. But it seems to me we have to *enact* our grief, not just speak gravely *about* it. And then go on to enact joy, and rage and play, and so on. There's a very narrow range in the tone of elegiac stating. Much of what I had to do was learn how to break the poem open, let in many things that the later nineteenth century—maybe they lived them, but they weren't enacting them in poetry. So I parted company with Arnold when I discovered I had to *embody* and *enact* a wide range of things, not just *state* and *describe* our losses.

Q : Technically you may not be close to Arnold, but content-wise I think you are.

A : Up to about 1980, that's probably fair. There's *Kingdom of Absence, Civil Elegies* the next year, and *The Gods* in 1979. It's probably not a distortion to see their content as "Matthew Arnold, 100 years later." When you get to the sequences of the eighties and nineties, though, to "Riffs" and "Nightwatch," the comparison breaks down. They're still responding to dilemmas Arnold faced, maybe—but they go places he never let himself know about, in poetry at least.

Q : Do you consider your poetry transitional in nature, or as a complete break with earlier traditions ?

A : Well, it doesn't have a lot in common with most poetry being written in English now. I don't think about that, I just try to make words that feel right. But the results are hard to pigeonhole. They obviously aren't "traditional". But neither do they fit the countre-tradition-of a perpetual avant-garde, which had been institutionalized in North America. You can see the approach in the poets who take Pound or Charles Olson as their point of departure. I can admire their work, but that kind of non-stop experimentation is not my way. It feels doctrinaire somehow. And the same goes for poets who've latched onto the newer avant-garde orthodoxies. In fact, they mostly put me to sleep.

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Do you know about this recent stuff ? During the last ten years in Canada, the big craze has been the new French schools of criticism – semiotics, structuralism, post-modernism, deconstruction and so on. It's actually a second-hand craze; we're clambering onto American and British bandwagons, where this stuff is already fashionable. Jacques Derrida is the most influential figure, but there's a whole platoon of them. Anyway, it's one more hot gospel from the imperial centre. A lot of it is just jargony, in-group rituals. It's dumb, the way only clever people can be dumb – particularly the camp followers,, which is what we mostly have in Canada. The originators at least have more substance.

Q : I said transitional because in *Kingdom of Absence* you talk about being "hung between styles."

A : Ah. That's a more limited point; I went off on a rant there. *Kingdom of Absence* is a young man's book, and it *is* "hung between styles." You can tell this guy has studied English literature at university, and he's read a lot of philosophical ideas about the cosmos; but has he found his own voice ? No, he hasn't – he's hung between styles. That line was my rueful acknowledgment of the immaturity of voice.

The first time I wrote in my own voice was in *Civil Elegies*: to some extent in the 1968 version, and much more in 1972. And now I write in many different styles – but I don't believe I'm "hung between" them. The poem deliberately moves through a whole range of voices, it's polyphonic. In fact, that vocal many-ness *is* the voice I craved from the beginning, but couldn't get at.

Q : So *Civil Elegies* is a mature work, in which the poet expresses his essential vision.

A : It was my first mature work. And it's where I dealt most explicitly with public themes – life in the *polis*, the public crena, what does it mean to be a citizen ? But of course you can't just keep retracing the same steps; I've gone on to other things since then.

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Q : Would it be appropriate to say that you moved away from common linguistic experiments and developed your own poetic style?

A : I think so. Linguistically, *Kingdom of Absence* worked within assumptions you find in earlier twentieth – century writing, or even late nineteenth-century – not that it worked well within them. But then I found myself growing into discoveries of my own, particularly the possibility of orchestrating different voices in the same poem – what I just called "polyphony."

Q : What attracted you to that ?

A : Well, the first thing is simply that it *did* attract me. I didn't start with the idea, "I think I'll explore polyphony." I'd barely even heard of it. But I found myself tugged in that direction intuitively. It's only afterwards that I could see why – or even discern what it was I'd been reaching for.

The main thing is that different voices in a poem – different tonalities, textures, timbres – see, they're not just so many technical devices, which you arrive at in a vacuum and then apply wherever you like. They embody whole different ways of being human : in fact, different ways of the world being itself. Because the world is richer than our modern ways of knowing allow. Within the discourse of the western mind during the last few hundred years, we've shrunk everything "true" down to what we think of as "fact". But the real world doesn't exist that way. We experience many different kinds of truth in it simultaneously. You know ?

Here's an example, though it's no more than metaphorical. Right now you are sitting here in my basement in Toronto. But at the same time, part of you is subliminally engaged with your life back in India; and you're also (let's say) having a nag of angry feelings about somebody you met this morning who was rude to you – plus, you're very excited about an idea you glimpsed as you came up to my door, but which you'd forgotten about till just now – plus, you had a lousy breakfast, and *that's* still ticking in your body – and you have a deep sense of yourself existing within timeless time – and on and on, all

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these incommensurable things are true simultaneously in your consciousness, and in the world. And the same is true for each one of us, the many-ness of how the world is inflected for us, moment by moment. *That* is our immediate given – not some homogeneous mental universe of value – free fact, which is really an abstraction.

So to write polyphonically, to write in different voices in the same poem, that's a way of honouring the world we actually live in. Of miming the world's own multiplicity, multi-valency.... Now, who is writing that way today ? I haven't found many people. The poets I love the most tend to – I've mentioned Purdy. Looking at the whole century, Eliot does; Pound too, though with reservations I'll get back to. But mostly I've to find my own way. And that is one reason my work doesn't look like other Canadians'. Or like many Americans', for that matter. Certainly not like British poetry now; it's not on this wave-length at all. Polyphony arises from quite a different cosmological intuition.

LEE INTERVIEW, Segment 3 :

Q : One of the major concerns in your writing has been the whole subject of colonialism. For us, colonialism means something different. What are your views on it ?

A : I grew up in a country that was doubly colonized; by 1945 we were passing from the British Empire into the American. But until I was 25 I had no idea that was even the case. So I'm pretty impressed by my own capacity for ignorance. I'd like to learn from the Indian experience, as much as tell you about ours. Besides, I've read almost nothing theoretical on the subject. Some Fanon in the sixties, that's about it. Whatever I say comes from thinking about what I've seen in Canada, and from listening to other people's experience.

Let me start a few steps back. Maybe because I come from European stock (English and Irish), it took me a while to recognize what a strange and terrible thing it was – I mean that amazing ex-

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plosion of empire, fanning out from the tiny patch of Europe, which transformed the planet between 1500 and 1950. Wasn't it incredible? Plundering whole continents. Smashing entire peoples, millennial ways of life. With the English, Spanish and French in the lead, and the Dutch and Portuguese getting in there too; and the Germans mercifully misfiring at the end. (Then the American and Russian empires took over, but they were just the next chapter in the story.) In the history of human beings on earth, it was almost comparable to—oh, the invention of agriculture, or the development of cities, as a transforming stage. It was seismic. And that tidal wave of empire has had a huge effect on the literature of every country that got "discovered" and "civilised". On more than just their literature, of course, but that's what we're talking about here.

Now, at this point most of us live in countries that are nominally ex-colonies. We've achieved political independence from England or France or Spain. But at the same time we've become subject to a new and murkier imperialism : of multi-national corporations, American lifestyle, Great Power spheres of influence. (Complicated now by the Soviet collapse.) It's a tricky business to assess, especially trying to get the whole legacy of cultural colonialism into focus, not just the political alignments. Many of us, in effect, live in *ex-colonies* which have simultaneously been *re-colonized*. How do you get a handle on that ?

But start with the previous stage, when much of the globe was colonized by Europe, and then broke free. The thing I've realised in the last decade is how alike we are in the ex-colonies, and at the same time how different. You know ? You can't really talk about "cultural colonialism." You have to think in the plural, of "cultural colonialisms." We're all special cases : in Nigeria and Brazil and Australia and the Phillipines and Egypt and India and Jamaica—each set of writers has a unique story. What the shape of *their* colonial experience was; how it informed and deformed *their* imaginations. And still does. Each of our national experiences is lousy, and valid, and a doozer to get into focus. Eventually you start to

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revel in all this variety among colonial writers. And that's the first half : how totally various we are.

It took me a while to make out the basic elements that configure the variety. (At first I assumed the Canadian experience must be typical of everybody's, which it ins't.) You can pinpoint them with some questions. For instance : once it was colonized, was your country mostly European in population, or mostly indigenous ? Think of India and Canada. Mainstream Canadians have always been the same colour and stock as our imperial masters, and we've spoken the same language. But for you, it's largely been the opposite. That creates radically different experiences of colonialism–for the imagination, as much as for the citizenly self.

Then : is your country first-world or third-world-with all the brutal differences that implies ? Again : What has happened to the vernacular language of your people, if you're not of European descent ? Is it spoken or read by a tiny minority, or by hundreds of millions ? Are you still at home in it yourself ? Do you write in it always ? sometimes? never ? And before the imperial takeover, was that indigenous vernacular a written one, or purely oral ? Did it already have a high literature ? Further : What was your personal experience of the imperial language – of English : (or French or Spanish) ? Did it seduce you, or rape you ? empower you or leave you inarticulate ? Do you write in it now ?

When you flesh out the answers to all these questions, you start to get the rich mutations among colonial writers into focus. For instance, there may be ten distinct patterns within India alone. And each will be different from an English Canadian's experience; *and* a native Canadian's; *and* a Fijian's; *and* a Peruvian's. And so on. And the crucial thing is that each is correct, each is normative, each has embodied a set of life–necessities for the writerly imagination. We're not competing to become a single new cultural boss-man. What we can offer each other is the wild variety of ways in which we've survived colonialism. To the extent that we have. Which together define the whole rich miserable mosaic.

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LEE INTERVIEW, Segment 3A :

Q : What would you say is unique in the way English Canadian writers experienced colonialism ?

A : I can only make a pass at that. But let me point to several things that may be different from people's experience elsewhere.

First : we know that it's possible to be a rich, first-world country, and at the same time a cultural colony (in our case now, of the United States.) That may be hard to credit in India. But here you are in Toronto, and you just have to look around to see it in every blatant and subtle texture of our lives : in our pop music, TV, movies, paperbacks, chain restaurants, literary quarterlies, fads in criticism and so on. They're overwhelmingly American. Of course, it goes without saying that this is a soft colonialism; it's obscenely comfortable in material terms. But that doesn't keep it from being crippling and demeaning. The imagination can be deformed and rendered inauthentic in many different ways. And in Canada, what now comes most naturally is to work with American iconography—whether in mass culture or high culture—as the basic language of the imagination. To write *as a Canadian* is much more problematic... Our achievements of the last 25 years have to be understood in that context; they're even more impressive when you know the background, of Canada being a first-world country that is also a client-state or colony of the U.S.

Q : Let me interrupt for a minute. Isn't there a contradiction between describing your country as a colony, and saying that your writers have become post-colonial ? Is it really possible for artists to transcend colonialism when their country is subjugated ?

A : That's a crucial question. And I agree : it seems contradictory. But we have to start with what we find—and what we find is that artists' imaginations sometimes *do* flourish, become more deeply rooted, come into their own, even while their nation is losing more and more of its political, economic, and cultural independence. You

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can have post-colonial artists in a colony. If theory doesn't allow for that anomaly, then theory just has to catch up. And it's undeniable that many ex-colonies have come of artistic age in recent decades. These last fifty years have more or less belonged to the ex-colonies, if you look at literature globally. But in terms of power politics, their independence has often been eroding out from under them, all over again... Let's get back to the anomaly later.

Here's a second thing English Canadians know. Most colonies of Europe won their political independence during the last 100 years, and their cultural independence more recently still. But there's one exception, and it makes the situation of all English-speaking writers unique. The United States broke away from English incredibly early—in 1776, politically and before 1900 in their literature. And they went on to become *the* dominal imperial power.

So not only did writers in other English-speaking colonies have to extricate themselves from the fading dominance of Britain—they were likely to do so by passing directly into the orbit of Hemingway and Faulkner, Pound and Eliot, as exemplars of how to imagine their lives in words. There was this whole vital, expansive new Yankee tradition taking them by storm. And it was terrific, often enough. But the imaginative vocabulary it furnished wasn't necessarily any more authentic for construing *their* lives than the British one had been. So it became a new imperialism.

No other ex-colonies have had this two-tiered imperialism to deal with—at least, not in their own language. Think of Latin America, where so many of the greatest literary achievements of the last seventy years have taken place. What they had to free themselves from was the exhausted tradition of Spain and Portugal. And they did so magnificently—but without facing this bizarre complication. There wasn't a new Spanish-language imperialism hijacking their imaginations, just as they were getting out from under the dominance of Spain. That is unique to English-speakers. And because of our geographical position, it's something Canadians know with particular intimacy.

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It's accentuated by more than just our physical proximity to the U.S.—and this is a third unusal aspect of our colonial experience. The whole thing is made weirder still by the fact that we look like Americans, we talk the same language, we share many of the same traditions. We don't have a built-in reservoir of native otherness—in colour, language, religion, millennial history—to turn to and explore as who we *are*, prior to the colonized identity. I'm not lamenting this lack of obvious difference, any more than anyone should lament the opposite. I'm just trying to pinpoint the Canadian experience of colonialism. For us, to separate from our British and American cultural masters has been, in some intimate sense, to separate from ourselves. And that's another wrinkle we bring, one more local variation on the colonial experience.

LEE INTERVIEW, Segment 4 :

Q : You said then experience of colonialism is not only different in various countries, but also alike. You've mentioned things that are unique to English Canada. What about things we have in common ?

A : Oh, silence, shame, inferiority, self-deprecation, defensive bragging—the usual baggage of the colonial.

I think it helps if you distinguish three stages in colonial experience. The you don't get so tangled up when you start making comparisons. The first stage is colonialism itself. The second is decolonisation. And the third is the post-colonial. It's a simple model; but once you live it, you know a number of things first-hand that you couldn't have predicated in advance. And *they* should be the basis for what you say about colonialism—not some abstract theory.

During the first stage, of outright colonialism, we have all the local differences we've just spoken of. But underneath we share a common legacy as writers. Namely : we are alienated from the language we're trying to write in. Whether it's English, Hindi or whatever. And taking "language" to include the actual words, but

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also the myths and mystiques they embody. (For instance : in a given language, what it tacitly implied when you discribe a sunset ? What is the shape of a resonant plot ? And so on.)

Now, if we write in the imperial language, we're alienated because in the form in which it comes to us, it expresses the reality of Europe or America, not of our home. The medium really is the message, as McLuhan said. And by virtue of working within the deep structures of that language, we inadvertently end up expressing the foreign reality. We're giving an imaginative shape to our experience which was right for the Lake District or for New York, but which hasn't grown out of the millions of lives *we*'ve been produced by. And for that, at some level, we hate ourselves.

But equally : if we try to just ignore English (or French, or Spanish) and write in our own vernacular, we're also alienated – because (at this stage) it can't articulate the new reality which our home has turned into, after the imperial conquest. We may hate that colonized reality; but it's what we have become. And its new complexity makes the home language (rich and subtle thought it may be) feel old-fashioned, even "primitive." Which also humiliates us.

Either way, we tie ourselves in knots trying to prove we can write like Wordsworth or T.S. Eliot or whomever. Which is daft, when we live on the Candian Prairies or in central Calcutta. But that's what we really do ! Just look at our early literatures. And our not-so-early. Where everything we write is out of joint with itself, no matter how well we learn to ape the externals of the imperial models. We're always on the outside looking in. And at the same time, we're separated from the authentic words of our own time and place – which have never yet been uttered, not in the new form which the imperial conquest had made necessary. So our truest experience is of a baffled muteness, papered over with reams and reams of somebody else's words. And we're likely to oscillate between denigration of everything that has been accomplished in our country, and pep-rally boosterism of the most mediocre achievements. The insecurity and stifled rage of the colonial tilt so easily into braggadocio, or else self-loathing. It makes your heart ache.

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All that crap is what we have in common during the long generations of colonialism. Including our personal beginnings, unless we were born very recently. I think it's the most widely explicated stage of colonialism, and it's nauseating stuff. But by now, maybe, most of us can flinch and grin and be candid with each other, about how painful and unfair and ridiculous it was. Because it's receding. Perhaps we can compare notes on what made it sociologically unique in Trinidad, or Tunisia, or New Zealand, and yet psychologically pretty much the same everywhere. And of course when we know this stuff in our bones, we know something – for better and worse – that no mainstream imperial writer has experienced. It's a badge of common servitude of the imagination.

We may also start to decipher an aesthetics of colonialism – a poetics of the inauthenticity which mostly defined our various literatures, during the first century or two after the imperial takeover. That wordy colonial silence. And maybe we'll discern the first gropings of authentic voice as it began to emerge – perhaps in a couple of lines in a poem of 1895 or in a single story written in 1926.

That's something that would intrigue me : having an Indian or an Egyptian or a Colombian show me, con-cretely, where they detect the early flickers of indigenous voice in their national literature. Where there already was a notable literature before colonisation, of course, the challenge is different : to spot the poems or novels that first begin to recast that indigenous tradition (rather than simply transferring imperial models into the local vernacular – which is the first, still-colonial stage.) In either case, the breakthrough points in a colonial literature may be hard for an outsider to spot. It's a subtle matter, of discerning when the energy of the indigenous imagination is beginning to find a voice of its own, emerging out the other end of colonial muteness.

LEE INTERVIEW, Segment 5 :

Q : You're speaking of the second stage now, what you called de-colonization.

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A : Right. And I think you find that, under all our differences, our experience takes the same shape in this stage too. From one ex-colony to the next.

Q : What do you mean ?

A : Well, the first thing...I think this stage, of breaking the colonial silence, is the most mysterious. No matter how much analysis you come up with after the fact, there is still an element of the miraculous – that (say) a Neruda or a Marquez appears, and a whole people or a whole continent finds its voice. Five hundred years of colonized muteness erupt into words. How does that ever happen ? ...You can't fit it into any tidy, cause-and-effect explanation.

Often the words of the breakthrough are unprecedented. They don't just perfect existing literary models, they recast our whole sense of what is possible in poetry or fiction. In fact, they *have* to be unprecedented. Otherwise they would break free of the great imperial paradigms in the first place. That's what made Whitman's and Melville's achievements so great around 1850. They pitched the European rules, and found new ones that grew from the unprecedented imaginative reality *they* inhabited. And it's what you find in the great founders of national literatures in the other ex-colonies, during the twentieth century.

(Contd.)

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T.R. SHARMA

WESTERN INFLUENCE ON EARLY HINDI CRITICISM

Hindi prose came to its own in the late nineteenth century, although in the field of poetry we have such luminaries as Malik Mohammed Jayasi, Surdas, Tulsidas, Keshav Das and Bihari Lal, etc. As far as Hindi criticism is concermed till to-day we cannot justifiably claim to have any independent school, absolutely free from the influence of either Sanskrit poetics or Western thought. Literary criticism in Hindi is mostly imitative.

Claims are made to the effect that literary criticism in India originated with the *Rig Veda*. Kuppuswami in his boook *The Highways and Byways of Criticism in Sanskrit* credits the composers of the Richas of the *Rig Veda* with extraordinary critical insight.[1]

However, the first systematic treatise on poetics in India is Bharat Muni's *Natyashastra*. It is only after *Natyashastra* that a series of works on literary criticism in Sanskrit appeard. A few important works are *Kavyalankar, Kavyadarsh, Dhvnyalok, Kavyamimansa, Kavya Prakash, Rasgangadhar,* etc. Hindi writers before the mid-nineteenth century relied upon Sanskrit poetics for any evalution. In the Riti Kal of Hindi literature the Acharyas did nothing but to imitate the Sanskrit law-givers in this field. It is difficult to name the first literary critic in Hindi. In some of the early histories of Hindi literature such as *Shiv Singh Saroj* and *Mish-*

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rabandhu Vinod we have a reference to one Punda or Pusya who is reported to have written the first book of literary criticism in Hindi. But the book is not available. Some attempts were also made in Bhakti Kal to study the works of Surdas and Tulsidas to expore their views about literature as obtainable in their poetical works. But they were sporadic and could not give any consistent view of literature, although Surdas's *Sahitya Lahari* (1550) and Tulsidas's *Varve Ramayana* contain significant observations about literature. Here a reference may also be made to Kriparam's *Hitatarangini,* in which he presents a detailed analysis of *rasa* in the light of the *Natyasha*stra and of the types of heroines on the basis of both Bharata's *Natyashastra* and Bhanudatta's *Rasmanjari.* Although Kriparam in his book mentions a number of works on poetics and rhetoric written by his predecessors, none of the them is extant. Besides, there are some other interesting works which deserve mention here. They include Mohan Lal Mishra's *Sringarasagara* (1559), Gopa's *Ramabhusana* and *Alankar Chandrika*, Karanesha's *Karnabharana, Srutibhusana* and *Bhupabhusana*, Acharya Keshava Das's *Kavipriya, Rasikpriya*, etc.

Thus we find that Hindi literary criticism upto the last quarter of the nineteenth century parasitically rallied round the doctrines of Sanskrit poetics. The age old theories of *Rasa, Dhvani, Alankar, Vakrokti* and *Auchitya* were further illustrated and commented upon. Whatever was found in the writings of ancient Achatyas was slavishly accepted as authoritative. This imitation continued for almost two centuries from 1650 to 1850. During this period there was conspicuous absence of any freedom of enquiry and originality.

After 1876 the Britishers acquired an unchallenged political supremacy and hence an era of intimate intellectual and cultural interaction was ushered in. This interaction resulted in the enrichment of literature and thought on both the sides. As far as India was concerned, it was awakend from and age-old stupor.[2] Introduction of English language and literature in Indian universities and colleges as part of curriculum enabled Indian students and teachers to study various English literary genres and principles of criticism, and

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to understand their own literature in the wider perspective. They explored English literature and the principles of criticism of western scholars with open mind and tried to assimilate whatever they found new and useful to enrich Hindi prose, Hindi literary criticism and other branches of Hindi literature. This, in particular, enriched Hindi prose which was almost nonexistent before Bhartendu Harish Chandra.[3] Hindi was also introduced as one of the subjects at Fort William College, Calcutta. Hindi teachers prepared books of Hindi prose for syllabus. Comparative studies in the late nineteenth century further revealed many a deficiency in Hindi literary criticism. It was, therefore, natural that Hindi writers made efforts to understand the principles of English literary criticism and to assimilate them in their works. Dr. Bhagwat Swaroop Mishra writes :

> Hindi had an invaluable treasure of literary principles; nonetheless the Hindi literateurs assimilated the western principles of literary criticism to a very great extent. Desire to get the maximum from the west led to the publication of the poetic translation of Pope's *Essay on Criticism*. Whatever Ganga Prasad Agnihotri wrote about criticism in the first number of the magazine was an imitation of West. ...The sum and substance is that in the beginning of the modern literary criticism imitation of the West was one of the potential factors of its development.[4]

Thus it was in the last quarter of the nineteenth century that Hindi literary criticism could find a new direction by almost completly breaking with the Riti school of criticism. Of course, with ancient Sanskrit literary principles in mind, the Hindi literary critics inaugurated an era of literary criticism in Hindi under the influence of western thought. It resulted in the emergence of a new approach to evaluate literature.

In the beginning, the influence was discernible in the form of book-reviews, use of English critical terms, and internal and cross–references to English writers and their works, etc. The earliest literary critics in Hindi are : Bhartendu Harish Chandra, Badrinarayan Choudhary 'Premghan', and Balkrishna Bhatt. All the

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three were influenced by West in one or the other way. Bhartendu's essay entitled *Natak* and published in 1883 inaugurated Hindi literary criticism in the true sense. The essay displays Bhartendu's eclectic genius. While referring to the sources of the essay he mentions such books as *Dashroopak,* Bharata's *Natya Shastra, Shaitya Darpan, Kavya Prakash,* Wilson's *Hindu Theatres, Life of the Eminent Persons, Dramatists and Novelists, Arya Darshan,* etc. This clearly displays that Bhartendu relied upon the Western thought to a considerable extent in writing his epoch-making essay. The essay reflects Bhartendu's tendency to harmonize eastern and western principles of dramatic criticism. He aims at not only underlining the richness of ancient dramatic criticism in India but also at highlighting the western dramturgy. Besides, the critics of drama from the west, he seems to have also been influenced by such writers as Francis Bacon. For example, in the following passage, while urging upon the dramatists to be cautious about certain things at the time of writing dramas, he also echoes Bacon :

> If human nature has to be studied, then one should travel to different countries and live in them for a while; one should establish intercourse with diverse social groups and listen to their conversation, read a variety of books, and, above all, converse with ostlers, cowherds, menials, villagers, robbers and with all common and ordinary people. A thorough critical evaluation of human nature is not possible without them. The feelings of human heart, like the various tendencies of human psyche, are intangible. It is only with the operation of the reasoning faculty as well as with the deep observation of the external acts of the world that one may study the life around. The writing of drama without all this (intellectual equipment) is sheer wastage of time.[6]

Under the western influence Bhartenduji also introduced biographical criticism. His introductory life-sketches of Kalidas, Jaideva, Surdas and Pushpadantacharya show the beginning of diverse critical modes is Hindi literary criticism.

The western influence further evident in the sudden appearance of various newspapers, magazines and periodicals in

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Hindi, remindful of the early eighteenth century England of *The Spectator, The Tatler*, and *The Rambler*. All the major literary critics of this time–Pt. Badri Narayan Choudhary 'Premghan', Balkrishna Bhatt, Pt. Ganga Prasad Agnihotri, and Baboo Balmukund Gupta–were the founders of and contributors to one or the other newspaper or magazine of the period. But again Bahrtenduji, in this field too, did the pioneering work. He floated magazines namely *Kavivachanda Sudha*, (1868), *The Harishchandra Magazine* later nomenclatured as *Navodita* (1883), and *Balbodhini* (1883). 'Premghana' started *The Anand Kadambini*, and the *Naari Nirad*, Balkrishna Bhatt the *Hindi Pradeep*, Pratap Narayan Mishra *The Brahman* and Balmukund Gupta edited *The Hindi Bangwasi* and *The Bharat Mitra*. Literary articles published in these magazines reflect strong western influence. Writers made free and frequent use of English words and coined new technical terms. Many of them quite often referred to English poets in order to point out comparisons. For example, Balkrishna Bhatt in his article, 'Sacchi Samalochana' published in 1886 in *Hindi Pradeep* follows the line of criticism adopted by such English critics as Dr. Johnson, Hazlitt, and Charles Lamb in their criticism of the plays of Shakespeare. While referring to Bhavabhuti and analysing the characters of Shrinivas Das's drama *Sanyogita Swayamvar*, he underlines the internal conflict and the spirit of times and points out that a playwright must be more concerned with the internal working of human mind and heart than with parading scholarship :

> *Sanyogita Svayamvar* is a historical play written by Lala Srinivasa Dasa, a resident of Delhi. Lalaji, if you do not feel offended, I would quietly ask you a question : what really do you mean by a historical play ? Does only a superficial historical representation of a past event constitute a chronicle play ? ...How did the people of a particular period feel ? What were their inner feelings ? Or, what exactly was the spirit of the times ? First try to understand all these things in their proper historical perspective, and then only you may represent them in a historical play. Only the use of archaic language does not make the characters of a chronicle play convincing

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and alive....Instead of calling your characters human, it would not be amiss if they are dubbed as mechanical contrivance for coining archaic expressions.. so much so that even the poor Sanyogita is busy with the display of her own scholarship.... To present only arguments and counter arguments like a logician instead of producing the sweet joy of poetry is to strangle the experience itself to death....As far as my experience of the drama goes, its beauty lies in its characters being presented as separate and discinct individuals, but in your case all your characters, clumsy sermonizers as they are, have been found uniform in spirit.... What the drama requires is not the display of any scholarship but an acquaintance with the working of human heart....Take pity and do not so callously murder the creative spirit....Lalaji, have you ever pondered over how delicate women's nature is and how bashful they are ....?[7]

In the entire passage we have no impression of the different types of heroes and heroines as prescribed by Sanskrit dramaturgy for writing dramas. The criticism in this passage is not based on the stereotyped analysing of a hero or a heroine. Inner conflict is a typical characteristic of the protagonist in a successful drama of the west as is evident from the plays of Shakespeare. Bhattji also lays stress, much unlike the eastern view of drama, on author's being fully aware of the spirit of the age to which his characters belong. In this respect he echoes Saint-Beauvex and Taine. In his ambivalence in relation to rhymed and unrhymed poetry, Bhattji remainds us of Dr. Johnson who though agreed with the existence of poetry without rhyme, and yet warned against confusion and disorder issuing from blank verse. On the model of Dr Johnson's *Lives of Poets,* Bhattji wrote biographical accounts of ancient Sanskrit writers such as Kalidas, Bhavbhuti, Sri Harsha, Varahamihira, Valmiki, Goverdhanacharya and Jaideva. Another important Hindi critic of the period, 'Premghan' was a greater genius than Bhattji.[8] In his advice to the contemporary playwrights he enjoins on them to retain an illusion of reality. In this regard he echoes Coleridge's idea of "willing suspension of disbelief" which was earlier suggested by

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Gorgias and Plutarch. A perusal of literary criticism in Hindi, written in the last quarter of the ninteenth century, sets forth that the western influence on Hindi was not merely skin-deep. The Hindi critics of this period had tried to bring about a synthesis in the eastern and western principles of literary criticism and they quite often unhesitatingly abandoned the Indian mode of criticism. However, these efforts were preliminary and lacked maturity and objectivity.

In the age that followed Bhartendu Harish Chandra things in the field of literary criticism written in Hindi, became worse. Dr Mahavir Prasad Dvivedi, after whom the age is named, emerged as the saviour. He was a profound scholar of Sanskrit and English. Naturally, his critical works display a synthesis of the two trends of literary criticism. His acquaintance with the work of the western writers in general and of the English in particular, expanded his critical horizon. He gave a deciding turn to Hindi criticism through his essays collected in *Rasajna Ranjana*. He was particularly influenced by the early nineteenth century English Romantic poets. Like Wordsworth, he believed that there was no essential difference between the language of prose and that of poetry. However, he held that the language of poetry and prose should be acceptable to civilized society. So far Hindi writers believed that the language of poetry must be free from the vulgarity of common speech and words. They also held that so long as words did not pass through the mouth of common people they would retain their poetical character.[9] Dvivediji ridiculed this idea and declared, "The language of prose and that of poetry are not to be separated. Hindi is the only language in which prose and poetry are written in two different languages. Whatever be the language of the civilized society it ought also to be the language of literature in prose and poetry."[10] The whole idea seems to have a close resemblance with what Wordsworth says about the language of poetry, " ...that there neither is, nor can be, any essential difference between the language of prose and metrical composition."[11]

Like Coleridge, Dvivediji underlined the importance of im-

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agination in poetry, and like Shelley, he laid emphasis on the sensitivity of a poet. He writes :

> ... while describing separation, a poet should experience the pangs of separation himself and should feel that he himself is weeping and wailing; while depicting beauties of nature he should be capable of realizing as if he were himself standing before a river, mountain or forest and observing the beauties of nature. When the poet inalienably identifies himself with the object he is describing, his description appears to be realistic and convincing and then alone he arouses identical feelings in the heart of a reader.[12]

According to Dvivediji, following are the five essentials of a good poem :

1. Poetry should reflect the condition, thoughts and instincts of commonmen.
2. It should deal with characters endowed with forbearance, courage, love, pity, etc.
3. It should have delicate sensibility and should be free from ornamental and metaphorical descrptions.
4. The language be simple, spontaneous and charming.
5. Meter should be simple, familiar and it shold suit the description.[13]

In at least two points Dvivediji closely echoes Wordsworth. In his preface to the *Lyrical Ballads* Wordsworth made four claims : first, "to choose incidents and situations from common life; second, " to relate or describe them throughout, as far as was possible, in a selection of language really used by men;" third," to throw over them a certain colouring of imagination whereby ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual aspect;" and, last, "above all, to make these incidents and situations interesting by tracing in them, truly though not ostentatiously, the primary laws of nature." The emphasis of Dvivediji is more on the language and themes, like Wordsworth who devoted greater part of the Preface to justify the first two claims. The influence of Wordsworth on Dvivediji is also perceptible on the five essential characteristics of

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poetry as pointed out by the latter. Like Wordsworth, he discarded the forced use of figures of speech and laid stress on the spontaneous overflow of emotions. Wordsworth freed poetry from the shackles of age-old rules related to language, theme and metre. As a liberator in the field of art and literature he preceded the liberator in the social and political field. Wordsworth demolished the bourgeosie concept of poetry and laid stress on literature for the people much before Marx, Tolstoi and Gorky. Dvivediji seems to have been influenced by Wordsworth in this regard. He attacked the monopoly of 'Brijbhasha' as he found it inadequate to explain and interpret the then literary and social thoughts. Dvivediji worte, "To use one language for conversation and another for poetry is contrary to the laws of physical nature. The predominance of 'Brajbahasa' over the poetry of the people who converse in Hindi and serve its prose literature cannot last long."[14]

Dvivediji seldom referred to any western critic in his works, but his critical opinions are resonant with the ideas of many a western writer and critic. For example, while referring to the qualities of great literature, he resounds Milton's views, who believed that good poetry should be simple, realistic and inspiring. Again like Philip Sidney, he believes that poetry should delight and teach. In this regard he is close to the Roman critic, Horace, who believed that poetry could not be divorced from teaching. Dvivediji was opposed to the idea of 'Art for Art's sake'. He held that a poet should have a high ideal before him and to write for art's sake was a mere showmanship. He naturally and successfully crusaded against the sensuality of 'Ritikalin' poets. His views on the ideals of a poet, poetry and verse, and relationship between poetry and culture; etc., echo the opinions of the western thinkers. As an editor of the famous Hindi magazine, *Sarswati* he disseminated the western critical ideas and popularized English poems by publishing their Hindi translations.

Immediately after Dvivediji some puerile attempts were made in the field of comparative literature, setting forth the influence of western literature on its Hindi counterpart. Mishrabandhu (the

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three brothers, Pt. Ganesh Bihari Mishra, Rai Bahadur Shyam Bihari Mishra and Rai Bahadur Suk Dev Bihari Mishra) is a strange literary phenomenon, as the three brothers in collaboration but without separate identification wrote a few important critical works in Hindi. In their historical and biographical criticism they were influenced by western critics, like Taine and Dr. Johnson.[15] They also made superficial attempts to compare the different ages of Hindi literature with the corresponding periods of English literature. At times their comparisons of the Hindi Bhagt poets with their English counterparts of the Renaissance and Reformation appear quite ridiculous. To compare Chaucer with Chandrabardi and Shakespeare with Tulsidas is a trivial intellectual exercise. Again it is absurd to compare Milton and Keshavdas on the basis that both of them had great reverence for classical languages, Milton for Latin and Keshav for Sanskrit. More childish is the comparison of the love in Shakespeare's *Winter's Tale* with Sita's love in *Ramcharitmanas*, Regan's craftiness in *King Lear* with that of Kaikayi's in *Ramcharitmanas* and Cordelia's sacrifice with that of Rama's. The Mishra-trio also betrays lack of insight in their comparison of Padmakar with Walter Scott. Pt. Krishna Bihari Mishra (outside the Mishra-trio) , too, indulges parading his acquaintance with western literature and also his ignorance, when he makes a comparison between Shakespeare's heroines and that of Matiram's and shows Matiram a greater poet than Shakespeare. He also refers to the critical opinions of Wordsworth and Coleridge and quotes from Tennyson, Leigh Hunt, Byron and Cardinal Newman.

However, it is Dr. Shyamsunder Das, who, before Ramchandra Shukla, made the most effective use of his understanding of the western literature and criticism. He was able to assimilate the western literary trends and critical principles, and naturally could produce critical writings, displaying his nearness more to the west than to Sanskrit poetics. In the preface to his book of literary criticism, *Sahityalochan*, he refers to his aim :

> I want to organize the literary principles of the east and the west in such a way as to help a student of Hindi not only in

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> assessing the merits and demerits of a book in the right perspective but also in writing a creative piece without blemish. In this respect I can say that I have borrowed the entire material of the book from others. But as far as organizing, embellishing and enunciating the matter and putting it in Hindi is concerned I can claim originality.[16]

The fact is that Dr. Shyamsunder Das has almost reproduced the western literary opinions in this book. He has relied very heavily on Hudson's *An Introduction to the Study of Literature.* In the second edittion he has at many places almost literally translated passages from Hudson.

Then Dr. Das seems to have been influenced by the elusive escapism of the Romantics and the smug morality of the Victorians. Like Romantic critics, he believe that with the help of literature a man could temporarily forget the pains and tribulations of life and imaginatively transport himself from the sordid realities of the world into an imagnative world of beauty. He was influenced by Romantic poet-critics such as William Blake, Shelley, Victor Hugo in his belief that poetry should emanate from poet's intuitive realizations. He follwed Hegel and Croche, as far as his views on aestheticism were concerned. Croche held that art was an expression of impressions. Likewise, Dr. Das belives that the images of the external world created on the mind of the poet have their reflection in his works. He gave his views on *Rasa* in the light of Croche's opinins. He refers to Croche's belief that poetic creation is a spiritual exercise and thus he supports his view that *Rasa* is a divine experience. He was influnced by Hegel in his division of five fine arts. It was Hegel who first divided the fine arts into two groups: a) visual arts which consist of architecture, sculpture and painting; b) auditory arts which include music and poetry. Dr. Das followed this division of Hegel when he wrote that the fine arts were divisible into two types – first, those which provided intellectual satisfaction through visual faculty; secondly those which gave intellectual satisfaction through auditory faculty. He further follows Hegel when he assings to poetry the highest position among the fine arts on the basis of their concreteness and tangibility. He simply echoes Hegel when he

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writes that the minimal concreteness of an art imparts to it the highest position. In his views on imagination and its role in poetry, he is influenced by Addison in particular. He follows Matthew Arnold in declaring poetry as criticism of life. Discussing the nature and function of poetry, he writes : "Arnold holds that poetry is a criticism of life, and the value of poetry really lies, insofar as it implements the sublime principles, in the actual conduct of day-to-day existence."[17] In his practical literary criticism he depends upon English scholar, Grierson's principles. Even in his evaluation of *Ramacharitmanas,* he employs western techique. Like T.S. Eliot, he believes in unified sensibility and condemns subjective evaluation of any author. He finds Dr. Johnson wanting in objectivity. Further, he believed that it was the English novel that provided the Hindi writer with consciousness of ficition as a craft, "It must be remembred that this craft of fiction is a gift of the west, and all Indian novelists must make an unreserved acknowledgement of this bebt."[18] Like Henry James he held that as a distinct literary form the novel was in its broadest definition a personal and direct impression of life.[19]

Thus because of their interaction with the western creative and critical works earlier, Hindi critics were able to give a new direction to Hindi literary criticism. It was under the influence of the west that biographical and historical approach to literature was introduced and comparative literature became pouplar with the scholars. Before this interaction these critical modes were alien to Hindi critics and they only looked to Sanskrit poetics for any and every sort of literary evaluation.

REFERENCES AND NOTES

1. The oldest phase of literary criticism in India may be traced back to the *Rig Veda.* It is not meant to suggest that the *Rig Veda* bard was conscious of his position as a critic, yet it is quite possible that the bards were critics without knowing.

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Valmiki, supposed to be the first poet in Sanskrit, made a critical comment on metre and foot of one of his slokas. After having been deeply touched by the sight of the dying male bird, pierced by the arrow of a hunter, and the bewailing of female bird, Valmiki burst out in a deep sense of agony :

मा निषाद प्रतिष्ठां त्वमगमः शाश्वतीः समाः ।
यत् क्रौञ्चमियुनादेकमवधीः काम मोहितम् ।।

(Hunter, you may never have peace, because for no fault f the brid, you have killed it when it was overpowered by feelings of sex for its female companion).

Commenting on the structure of this sloka, Valmiki told his disciple, Bhardwaj Muni :

पादवद्धोऽक्षर समस्तन्त्रीलय समन्वितः ।
शोकार्तस्य प्रवृत्तो में श्लोको भवतु नान्यथा ।।

(Overpowered by grief I have made a statement which has four foot consisting of eight syllables and it be sung. Hence these words of mine are arranged in a metre known as sloka.)

2. There was, however, a mixed reaction to the transfer of power. Welcoming the transfer from the company to the Crown, 'Premghan,' one of the poets of that time in his poems, 'Hardika Harsadarsa' writes, "Glorious is the year 1858, the first day of November that would remove all the differences between right and wrong." Praising Queen Victoria, he further writes, "The adoption of a just policy has granted liberty of the subjects;/Justice is given to people in the hall of justice,/Expert in administration, kind, just and reliever of woes/ Educated, humble, discreet are the officers of the state." Quoted from Ravindra Sahay Varma's *Hindi Kavya Par Angla Prabhav*, (Kanpur, 1954) p. 58.

But Bhartendu Harishchandra reacted differently : " O my Indian brethern let all of us assemble and lament our lot;/The pitiable condition of our country is intolerably heart-breaking. ... Where is the divine benevolent Keshav sleeping/He is not yet awakened though the Indians have shed bitter tears."

Balmukund Gupta more indignantly moaned the fate of his country in the following words :

"The heaps of human skeletons are shattered all around;/The land is covered with the bones of men and animals,/ O my God, what sin of ours has led us to this vortex of the mid sea;/ A land where bones and skeltons are bought and sold." Ibid, pp. 64 – 65.

(The translations of Hindi verse into English are from Prof R.C. Prasad.)

3. It does not mean that there was no Hindi prose before Bhartendu. As back as in the age of Akbar there was a writer named Gang who wrote in Hindi prose. The Ram Prasd Niranjani's *Yoga Vashishtha* (1741) and the prose written in

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Brajbhasha by many saints and devotees are examples to be found in the Pre-Riti Kal. In the later half of the Riti Kal Munshi Sadasukh Lal (1746–1824), Inshallah Khan (d. 1817), Lallu Lal (1763–1835) and Sadal Mishra (1768–1848) enriched Hindi Prose with their writings. Munshi Sadasukh Lal who was an employee in the East India Company, translated a few extracts from the *Vishnupuran* into Hindi; Inshallah Khan wrote *Rani Ketaki Ki Kahani* in Khariboli prose; Lallu Lal and Sadal Mishra, who taught Hindi in the Government William College, Calcutta, wrote *Premasagar* and *Nasiketopakhyan* respectively in Brajbhasha with words from Eastern dialects. Just before the age of Bhartendu four importand writers contributed significantly to Hindi prose. First, Raja Shiv Prasad 'Sitare Hind' wrote *Raja Bhoj Ka Sapna, Vir Singh Ka Vrittanta, Alsiyon Ko Kora and Itihasa Timiranaska*. Secondly, Raja Laksman Singh translated *Sakuntala* and *Raghuvansa* into Hindi. Likewise, Navin Chandra Roy and Pandit Sraddharama Fullori also wrote in Hindi prose. However, Bhartendu, more than anybody, realized the importance of Hindi and he declared, "Perfection of one's own language is the root of prosperity, and only a sound knowledge of it can dispel the ignorance (bitterness) of the soul." (Quoted from Dr Venkata Sharma's *Adhunic Hindi Sahitya Men Samalochana Ka Vikas* (Atma Ram and Sons, Delhi, 1962), p. 150.

4 Dr. Bhagwat Swaroop Mishra, *Hindi Alochana, Udavabh Aur Vikas* (Sahitya Sadan, Dehradun, 1972), pp. 225–26. The translation is mine.

5. See *Bhartendu Granthavali*, I, 713.

6. From Venkata Sharma, p. 153.

7. *Hindi Pradeep*, April, 1886, p. 17

8. Dr. Ramchandra Shukla in his *History of Hindi Literature* declares 'Premghan' as the beginner of Hindi literary criticism as he started the tradition of detailed differentiation of merits and defects of a piece under review.

9. Cf. Addison's views : "Since it often happens that the most obvious phrases, and those which are used in ordinary conversation, become too familiar to the ear, and contract a kind of meanness by passing through the mouths of the vulgar, a poet should take particular care to guard himself against idiomatic ways of speaking" *(Spectator, 285.)*

Cf. Gray's views : "The language of the age is never the language of poetry; except among the French whose verse, where the thought and image does not support it, differs in nothing from prose. Our poetry, on the contrary, has a language peculiar to itself; to which almost everyone that has written has added something by enriching it with foreign idioms and derivatives; nay, sometimes words of their own composition or invention. ('Life of Dryden', *Lives*, (G.B. Hill), I, 420.

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10. See *Rasajna Ranjana*, p.7.
11. See Wordsworth's Preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*. However, there is a subtle difference between Dvivediji and Wordsworth. While Wordsworth pleaded for "the language of conversation in the middle and lower classes of society," Dvivediji advocated for the language of the civilized society. Wordsworth's statement smacks of primitivism and naivety, Dvivedi's is free from it.
12. *Rasajna Ranjana*, p. 20.
13. Ibid., p. 31.
14. Ibid., p.8.
15. In Indian tradition there is no scope for historical and biographical criticism. Sanskrit Poetics attaches greater importance to creation than creator.
16. Dr Shyamsunder Das, *Sahityalochana*. (Indian Press Ltd., 1949), p. 7.
17. Ibid., p. 112.
18. Ibid., p. 190.
19. Ibid.

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Arun Prabha

The Indian School Child and Tom Sawyer and Mark Twain: Question of Reference

From Class I to Class VII the Indian school child struggles with the intracacies of the English Language as taught through the prescribed NCERT (National Council of Educational Research & Training) texts of the Central Board of Secondary Eduation. Then in Class VIII he reads a lesson from his English Reader[1] entitled *The Glorious Whitewasher* and almost for the first time, enjoys what he had read! Here he is told that the Lesson is an incident from *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* by Mark Twain[2]. He finds that he is able to identify with the protgonist of the tale, for he too is about thirteen-years as is Tom Sawyer, bound by a value structure that he does not quite comprehend, and would have loved to lie back eating the apple himself, if only he could have thought of the trick first! It is therefore, in this context, pertinent to appreciate The Relevance, of' The Adventures of Tom Sawyer'.

A small boy grows up during one summer in a town on the Mississippi. He is a romantic, highly imaginative little fellow, who enjoys playing as pirates, outlaws and other fanciful pursuits. He lives with Aunt Polly, a long suffering lady whose prosaic outlook on things causes him no little inconvenience. His closest friend is a devil-may-care lad named Huckleberry Finn, who accompanies him on his adventures. Tom has a girl too, whom he wants mightily to

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impress. In the course of his summer's activities he searches for buried treasure, sees a dastardly murder perpertrated by a halfbreed named Injun Joe, testifies in court as to what he saw, discovers a real treasure, goes off on a picnic with Becky Thatcher, is lost in a cave... and returns in triumph to claim his share of the treasure[3].

'What Mark Twain really does in the novel is to defy adulthood, defy the world of practicality, by proving that Tom Sawyer's child's world, with its pirates, robber bands, buried treasure, and Cardiff Hill green... is valid too. In a very real sense, Tom Sawyer arrests the progression of time, holds onto childhood instead of conforming to the values and habits of adults[4].' 'No adult or even adult-like action succeeds (Aunt Polly is even foiled in her attempts to have Tom Sawyer whitewash the fence!) and even bumbling adult planning goes astray. This notion of the excellence of simple innocence, imaginative and irrepressible and superior to adult methods of confronting the world'[5] serves only to reiterate the child's faith and optimism in and about his own judgements.

'Tom Swayer was himself a romanticist of course, and so was the author of his being at the time Tom was created. Tom is all the more a 'real boy' for being a romanticist, but his adventures are not real, they are romance; which is only to suggest that Mark Twain permitted him to have but the adventures a boy would **like** to have... Ofcourse this is not to say that none of Tom Sawyer's adventures could have happened to a boy. Any of them might, but not all of them **would** have happened to **one** boy, and perhaps we get right there a hint concerning the nature of what we call romance... Tom was the first full-blown **boy** in fiction. For this alone the book is a land-mark[6].

"Tom Sawyer's earlier actions are childish, the later manly; the earlier actions are full of trepidation, the later ones full of courage; the early are naughty the later socially useful. Taken together they trace Tom's progress from childishness to maturity. But one element, motivation, unites all the actions[7]."

When Mark Twain was once asked as to why we make our

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heroes, he is said to have replied, "We admire them, we envy them for the great qualities which we ourselves lack... Our heroes are the men who do the things which we recognise, with regret and sometimes with a secret shame, that we cannot do. We find not much in ourselves to admire, we are always privately wanting to be like someone else. If everyone was satisfied with themselves, there would be no heroes[8]." In his pre-puberty years, a school child is a bit dissatisfied with himself. He sometimes feels he can outsmart his parents (especially his Mother) and yet does not have all the tools needed to out-think his friends. Through both Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn he condescends to the fact that here are two teen-agers like him who can do the things which he cannot do and he privately then, wishes to be like them. The Tom Sawyer version of braggadocio and 'showing off' he empathises spontaneously. He too, is a 'dreamer of dreams' and would like to have 'the natural propensity for picking up his fans[9].'

Both Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn provide him the stuff of which his dreams will be made. This age group works 'not for applause as much as chivalrous generosity[10]' and in these 'two idylls of boyhood' their 'essential goodness of heart' shows through even in their most reprehensible or irresponsible foolery! Just as these two strive 'to win acceptance, admiration, love and leadership'[11] so are the readers hoping to 'win a place of some importance in society'[12], whether it be through 'soldiering, piracy, circus-clowning or steamboating'[13] and whether these be done on the billows of their minds curled up in bed or over their plate of rice!... the lure is the same! Tom's 'showing-off is aimed at a boy-audience, to win first place in a boy-world and it succeeds, ofcourse: Tom is general of his boy-army, Captain of his boy-pirate crew[14]' and this teen-age reader, boy-audience, boy-crew and boy-army that he is, all rolled into one, devouring these adventures page after page finds the book 'unputdownable' to coin a new word!

Commenting on *The Adventures of Tom Swayer*, Brander Mathews says that 'Tom Sawyer is the story of a lad who lives in a struggling, straggling town on the banks of the Mississippi: it sets forth his cleverness, his irresponsibility and his assurance, his energy and

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his ingenuity. He introduces us to a host of characters, all limned unforgettably with the utmost economy of stroke and with a humour as unsympathetic as it is rich. It bounds in scenes of sheer fun, always securely founded in exact observation of human nature[15]. It is through these characters and situations that the reader gets transported into the realm of Tom Sawyer.

Until now, that is in Class VIII, the CBSE student, learning his English as a 'Library Language' has struggled with the intracacies of spelling, the irrationality of its Grammar, filled in the correct prepositions and identified the Common Nouns. In short, he has been so pre-occupied with the mechanics of the subject that he has not yet acquired the vocabular and grammatical wherewithal to enjoy a book from the library! What he has had earlier in the year are extracts from Tolstoy, Lamb's Tales from Shakespeare ('*The Tempest*') and *Gulliver's Travels*. The Glorious Whitewasher is almost the last lesson in the Prose Section and he is more than convinced that he 'can't do English'. That is precisely the stage when the perceptive English teacher must call one or two receptive students to the Library and slip them a text of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. He canot believe at first that Tom Sawyer is from a book: that there's more to read about this appealing little fellow!

In 'An Unsigned Review' attributed to Brander Mathews, he says, "The boy of today is fortunate indeed... While the boy of yesterday had to stay his stomach with the unconscious humour of 'Sandford & Merton' the boy of today may get his fill of fun and romance and of adventure in Treasure Island and in Tom Browm and in Tom Sawyer[16]." The boy of today then gulps down this aperitif of English Literature and thirsts for more! The American Mark Twain seems to have lighted this little spark which should take him through a blazing trail!

When further the Teacher of English hands her class Eighth student a copy of Huck Finn to read, by way of titillating him into frequenting the Library, the child soon finds within its pages the prototype of the boy his Mother had always cautioned him against, told him not to associate with, the enviable waif who plays marbles all day while he has to submit himself to the rigors of his daily dis-

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cipline at school. Envy and curiosity hurtle him through page after page of the second book as well, as he vicariously plunges downstream with 'his friend' Huck! Albert Bigelow Paine says that 'Huck Finn is Mark Twain's Yip of Delight' at the things he saw all about him. From this Indian Schoolboy too, we hear a 'Yip of delight' in all that he reads about Huck Finn!

'*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is a sharp exception[17] to the rule that a sequel is never as good as the one that went before, says Brander Mathews! Although it is a sequel it is quite as worthy of vide popularity as Tom Sawyer[18], 'Huckleberry Finn is not an attempt to do Tom Sawyer over again. It is a story quite as unlike its predecessor as it is like. Although Huck Finn appeared first in the earlier book and although Tom Sawyer re-appears later, the scenes and characters are otherwise wholly different. Above all the **atmosphere** of the story is different. Tom Sawyer was a tale of boyish adventure in a village in Missouri on the Mississippi river and it was told by the author, Huck Finn in autobiographic. It is a tale of boyish adventure along the Mississippi river as it appeared to Huck Finn[19].'

The Adventures of Huck Finn is the story of a flight down the Mississippi of a white boy and a runaway slave. The stream takes them through fringes of life on the river – they pass feuds and murders of men, and towns full of homicidal loafers, and are intermingled with the affairs of families and meet friends with whom they would wish to be friends always. But the current carries them on: they leave the murders unavenged, the lovers in full flight... They do not return as in novels and narrate their later adventures. On the river or its shores many kinds of men are encountered, most of them evil or stupid or mean: cutthroats, murderers, cheats, liars, swindlers, cowards, slave-hunters, dupes, and hypocrites of every variety. Nor is the movement of the great brown river to be trusted. It carries Jim beyond freedom to capture again by respectable benevolent people whose conscience is untroubled by human slavery.'[20]

'In Tom Sawyer we saw Huck Finn from the outside; in the present volume we see him from the inside. He is almost as much a

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delight to any one who has been a boy as was Tom Sawyer. But only he or she who has been a boy can truly enjoy this record of his adventures, and of his sentiments and of his sayings. Old maids of either sex will wholly fail to understand him or to like him, or to see his significance and his value. Like Tom Sawyer, Huck Finn is a genuine boy; he is neither a girl in boy's clothes like many of the modern heroes of juvenile fiction, nor is he a "little man" , a full-grown man cut down; he is a boy, just a boy, only a boy.'[21]

'Mark Twain understands the American boy, and especially the American boy of the Mississippi valley..'[22] In this Mark Twain doesn't seem to be off the mark at all even in his understanding of the Indian boy — for, English, American or Indian, 'a boy is a boy, just a boy, only a boy.'

The contrast between Tom Sawyer, who is the child of respectable parents, decently brought-up, and Huckleberry Finn, who is the child of the town drunkard, not brought-up at all, is made distinct by a hundred artistic touches, not the least natural of which is Huck's constant reference to Tom as his ideal of what a boy should be... Both boys have their full share of boyish imagination; and Tom Sawyer, being vien to books, lets his imagination run on robbers and pirates and genies, with a perfect understanding with himself that, if you want to get fun out of this life, you must never hesitate to make believe very hard; and, with Tom's youth and health, he never finds it hard to make believe and to be a pirate at will, or to summon an attendant spirit, or to rescue as prisoner from the deepest dungeon 'neath the castle moat. But in Huck this imagination has turned to superstition; he is a walking repository of the juvenile folk-lore of the Mississippi valley — a folk-lore partly traditional among the white settlers, but largely influenced by intimate association with the negroes.'[23]

Admittedly as V.S. Pritchett says, 'if this is a great comic book, it is also a book of great terror and brutality'[24] and a child can only relate to these 'with a child's detachment and with a touch of morbidity.'[25] There is enough in the book to make a schoolboy munch his bowl of pop-corn faster! There's Pap Twain with his delirium tremens, there are drowned corpses and the pig-killing scene and

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vendettas and cynical rascals, 'marvellous as it all is ... as a description of the mess of frontier life, it is strong meat.'[26] Huck Finn passes through these 'adult situations' and confronts them with great aplomb and an instinctive decision-making capacity!

Albert Bigelow Paine in his Introduction to the Definitive Edition (Library of American Civilization) of The Writings of Mark Twain does admit that Hucks's story "was frowned upon by several meticulous librarians, even evicted from their shelves. This was because of Huck's morals, because he was not over-careful in the matter of statement, among other things, not always a proper example for youth.'[27] In accusing Tom and Huck for alleged 'subversion of morality'[28] they must have had in mind The books' endemic lying, the petty thefts, the denigrations of respectability and religion, the bad language and the bad grammar.'[28] Yet, the novel has been praised for "its power of telling the truth". In Mark Twain's earlier novel there were quite a few 'stretchers'. In Huck Finn, Mark Twain eliminates the author from the story-the narrator-the character chosen is a boy of fourteen who sees things realistically rather than philosophically.'[29]

Lionel Trilling in his Essay on 'The Greatness of Huckleberry Finn' adds that 'No one sets a higher value on truth than a boy. Truth is the whole of a conscious demand upon the world of adults... it is this which arouses Tom and Huck to their moral sensitivity their ever-lasting concern with justice, which they call fairness. At the same time it often makes them skillful and profound liars in their own defence, yet, they do not tell the ultimate lie of adults, they do not lie to themselves.'[30] At this stage of his life though, the student reader does not concern himself very much with "the inventerness that Twain's two heroes possess in concocting plausible stories.

"Huckleberry Finn", says T.S. Eliot, in describing it as Mark Twains's masterpiece, " is no doubt, a book which boys enjoy. I cannot speak from memory: I suspect that a fear on the part of my parents lest I should acquire a premature taste for tobacco, and perhaps other habits of the hero of the story, kept the book out of my way. But Hickleberry Finn does not fall into the category of juvenile fiction. The opinion of my parents that it was a book unsuitable for

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boys left me, for most of my life under the impression that it was a book suitable only for boys!'[31] In reading Tom Swayer, Eliot says, 'We look at Tom as a smiling adult does: Huck we do not look at, 'he adds, '—we see the world through his eyes."[31] Thus does our teen-age reader.

In analysing 'The Greatness of Huckleberry Finn' Trilling says 'that it succeedss first as a boy's book. One can read it at ten and then annually ever after, and each year find that it is as fresh as the year before, that it has changed only in becoming somewhat larger. To read it young is like planting a tree young – each year adds a new growth-ring of meaning, and the book is as little as a tree to become dull.'[32]

Sir Walter Besant in his Essay 'My Favourite Novelist and His Best Book' says much the same. 'I lay it down as one of the distinctive characteristics of a good story that it pleases – every period of life that the child, his elder brother, his father and his grandfather, may read it with like enjoyment – not equal enjoyment, because as a man gets older and understands more and more what the world of men and women means, he reads between the lines and sees things which the child cannot see and cannot understand. To discover and to read the super added letterpress, the invisible part of the printed page, is one of the compensations of age. The first quality I claim for this book, then, is that it does appeal to all ages and every age. The boy of twelve (this class VIII Indian student, even!) reads it with delight beyond his power of words to express; the young man reads it (delighting in remembering his youth) the old man also reads it[33] (and smiles in remembrance of his childhood which ne'er was so romantic!) Yet, all of them enjoy the book!

'There is no motive in the book; there is no moral, there is no plot. The book is like a panorama in which the characters pass across the stage and do not return. All happens by chance. There is no motive, there is no moral, there is no plot.'[34]

'Huck Finn is a homeless river rat whose hard life has taught him scepticism and horse-sense, but not toughened him with callousness and crimes, somehow preserving his innate decency,

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generosity, bravery and sense of human dignity.'[35] It is indeed, this preservation of his 'innate decency' that endear him to his young and old readers. One feels that if one were to encounter Huck Finn on the streets today, one would still recognise him from the values he embodied, for, they are universal, and endure even today.

'The story of Huck Finn is the story of a boy who will not accept the kinds of freedom the world is able to offer and so flees from them one after another, to become a symbol of man's inevitable restless flight. Huck Finn's solution to the problem of freedom is direct and unworldly. Having tested society he will have none of it.[36] This sort of escapism may not be exemplary to adolescent, but is oh-so-understandable! Mehar, in his *Novel : A Critical Analysis* quotes: 'It was a kind of a lazy, jolly laying off, comfortable all day smoking and fishing and no books nor study... back to rags and dirt which provided him the right kind of environment. Even occasionally beatings were considered insignificant compared to the freedom he otherwise had.'[37] What an 'idyll' for the Indian child to dream-up for himself and even in his dreams he would gladly be the 'brave periah boy'[38] that Lewis Leary talks about.

Just as a boy is not happy within an adult moral framework, Huck is not happy... Tom's make-believe (as in We Ambuscade the Arabs') is incomprehensible to him, the religion of retribution which Miss Watson teaches makes no sense at all... When his scrapegrace Father returns and carries Huck across the river to a desolate log-house, the boy accepts the abduction with relief because although he fears his Father's beatings and drunken rages he is freed from the restraints of tight clothing, school and regular hours and from the preaching and puzzling tangle of ideas which confuse village life. But the bondage of life with his Father chaffs also, so he steals down the river, at night to Jackson Island'[39] – wouldn't every teen-ager like to have a private, intimate Jackson Island of his own to steal away to? – not so much for adventure as for escape. Huck's seeking the wild, natural, the untutored make him very easy for the Indian school-child to identify with.

'Huck is introduced to us through his responses and reactions to the world which surrounds. His appearance, his habits and his

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thoughts and feelings are known through his actions. We learn that he is wild, uncontrollable, instinctive and superstitious – a set of hard traits extremely difficult to tame and to 'sivilize'... he is a child of the open frontier with its violence and fury, with its natural sympathy and goodness, with its innocence and humanity. When he rebels against the over-conventionalisation and sophistication, he sounds first the note of protest which later on becomes the dominant theme of the novel. He stands for "radical innocence and instinctive knowledge".[40]

Huck's revolt against the 'sivilizing' society 'the world of frontiners and frauds and violent shootings forces him to run to the raft on the mighty Mississippi where he feels free. "We said there wasn't no home like a raft after all. Other places seem so grasped-up and smoothery, but a raft don't. You feel mighty free and comfortable on a raft."[41] Through Huck's meticulous eye we get into the heart of frontier culture. But at no point does the reader feel alienated from Huck's experiences, and this is important, that floating on the raft, chewing tobacco, or waiting in the dark for Pap Finn to turn up, Huck makes us privy to his thoughts.

Huck has a personal sense of ethics which comes up occasionally for the people whom he loves... he cannot bear the victimisation of human-beings.. such situations intensify his sense of "right and wrong".'[42] It is with this 'personal sense of ethics' that our budding reader identifies most easily for his sensibilities correspond with Huck's re-actions.

'His sympathy is quick and immediate. Not the least thing about Huck's feeling for people is that his tenderness goes along with the assumption that his fellow-men are likely to be dangerous and wicked... and yet his profound and bitter knowledge of human depravity never prevents him from being a friend to man.'[43] 'No personal pride interfers with his well-doing.'[44] For most decisions he has only to consult his conscience, the conscience of a Southern boy in the middle of the last century, to know what he should be doing – for he is mostly alone.[45] The juvenile reader is so much in tune with the rhythm and candences of Huck's thoughts that his too are in tune with the waif's.

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Another characteristic which anyone reading the Adventures of Huckleberry Finn would admire right away, is Huck's stoicism. 'Here he is with a father who is greater and more horrible monster than almost any I can think of in fiction... he runs into every kind of danger... yet inspite of all the things which would reduce a small child either into becoming a criminal or a trembling nervous wreck Huck takes them as Acts of God which pass away, and yet one side of this stoicism is an attitude towards Time in which the immediate present is accepted as the Universal Presidcent.. it does not have to affect the future.'[46] Huck's stoicism, in the eyes of the adolescent reader blows him up into a hero, for the reader admires his 'guts' in most situations.

'There is no denying, however, that Huck's supreme virtue is his loyalty. Loyalty to Nigger Jim, loyalty even to his disreputable brute of a father, loyalty to those two river tramps and frauds, the kings and dukes for whom he lies prodigiously, pitying them in their misfortune.[47] This quality, in particular, the teen-ager finds the easiest to identify with supported as it is by his 'schoolboy morality' concept; Loyalty above all else – to friends, to 'his Gang' to even a 'secret'!

'One measure of his character is its proneness to deceit.'[48] Lewis Leary admits reluctantly as an apologia. 'Though not always successful it is instinctive, as if it were a trait with other world things, relating him to Nature in opposition to tradition grounded, book-learned, imaginative deceptions.'[48] The reader smiles at these attempts at duplicity, not necessarily does he decide to late the hero, directly.

The Indian student, at first, does find the interpretation of the Mississippi dialect a bit confusing, until he gets into the hand flow of the rhythms, the grammatical variations and the peculiar intonations. Soon he falls-in with Mark Twain's purpose and sees the world 'mirrorred in the eyes of the outcast vagabond.'[49] This 'colloquial speech' which allows Huck Finn to 'mispell and mispronounce'[51] words gives the ease and freedom of the language. Huck's vocabulory is never stilted with literary diction.. Huck's speech is as fresh and supple as his point of view.'[52]

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During the course of this chronicle, the Author has drawn the reader's attention to his younger days... This book has made a genuine effort to probe the life of the younger members of society. The Author has brought out an undistorted image of the days gone by. The theme of the book is unique as it really deals with adolescents rather than adults. The book has also clearly expressed typical boyish feelings of envy, jealousy, hero-worship, sorrow and love. Another aspect of this book deals with superstitions, which may appear very silly and foolish to adults, but if they look back through yester-years, they will discover that even they strongly believed in those age-old superstitions.

The book has also mentioned certain 'collector's items' accumulated by children. The exchange of dialogues is written exactly as if spoken in a typically 'boyish style'. However, since the book is more than a century old, the language is difficult to comprehend at a few places. Nevertheless, the book is certainly a classic as it does not deal with a fantasy world, but takes the reader into the realistic and unadulterated world of the young ones.'[53] Does the above Essay not prove conclusively that Mark Twain's efforts were not wasted on this Class eight student, that his writings are indeed relevant to him who is but an Indian teen-ager the late nineteen eighty's.

Conclusion

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer and of Huckleberry Finn are both boy's books written by a man who could recall at will what he had been when he was a boy. Mark Twain retained till the end of his life the essential characteristics of a boy – the delight in adventure for its own sake, the longing for the romantic, the eager audacity and the abiding desire to show-off. It was because Mark Twain continued to be a boy with a boy's outlook on life that he was enabled when he had acquired the art of writing, to give us these two humourous epics of youth, which are as interesting to a man who is fortunate enough to be able to recall sympathetically his own boyhood, as they are to an actual boy, still in his teens.'[54]

T.S. Eliot has written in 'Defence of the ending of Huckleberry

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Finn' to say that 'For Huck, neither a tragic nor a happy ending would be suitable. No wordly success or social satisfaction, no domestic consummation would be worthy of him, a tragic end also would reduce him to the level of those whom we pity. Huck Finn must come from nowhere and must be bound for nowhere.'[55]

It is with this charming stroke that Mark Twain really enchants that school-going child and entices him into the Library. From there it is easy to pull him into a world of RL Stevens on, R K Narayan, and then on through Charles Dickens and perhaps onto Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. But the English Teacher does need the wizardry of the American author to lead him thither and there-in lies the relevance of Mark Twain to the Indian School-going child.

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BOOK REVIEWS

S.M.H. BURNEY, *Iqbal, Poet–Patriot.* Translated by Dr. Syeda Saiyidain Hameed. New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 136. pp.

Iqbal, though a great exponent of Indian ethos, has not been in much favour in India for quite sometime mainly because he has been regarded as one of the founding-fathers of Pakistan. Mr. Burney's rebuttle of this oft-repeated notion comes as a welcome whiff in the almost closed-circuit appraisal of one of the greatest poets of the East. This full-length study of a fresh dimension in Iqbal's poetic genius emerged from a lecture that the author delivered at Bhopal in 1984. It goes to the credit of the scholar-Governor of Haryana that, by collecting, collating and sifting both primary and secondary sources, he has successfully built up a well-documented and convincing argument to augment his thesis.

No body questions Iqbal's love for India in his writings till 1905. His ode to the Himalayas eulogises the grand mountain as a sentinel of Indian solidarity. His poems like *Tarana-e-Hindi, Naya Shivala* and *Tasveer-e-Dard* reflect his deep concern and anguish at the climate of communal discord and his percepient awareness of the fact that in a multi-religious country like India, unity consists not in eliminating but in integrating the plurality of religious strands that knit the mosaic-like matrix of its culture. Iqbal realised that the maladies that afflicted India under British imperialism had their panacea in toleration and compassion that form the crux of Indian philosophy.

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Iqbal's sojourn in Europe between 1905-1908 proved a turning point in his mental-make-up. It is alleged that he went to Europe as a nationalist and returned as a pan-Islamist. But that was because he had realised how narrow nationalism stretched to chuvinistic extremes under the impact of European imperialism created mutually warring nation-States. Once he felt that Islam could provide a viable alternative to the discord and disharmony generated by Western polity he, to quote V.G. Kiernan, "held up his mirror to Europe's face in the spirit of Hamlet confronting his mother."

Iqbal's disenchantment of European nationalism stemmed from his realisation that it had "the germs of atheistic materialism" which spelt disaster for humanity. Iqbal visualised for India the pivotal role of a torch-bearer for extricating the East out of the morass into which the West had plunged it. He felt that India alone could save the East from the malignant effects of the West which he regarded as "a cancerous growth in the human system." For this, India had first to emancipate itself from the slavery of the West by resisting the eroding onslaughts of Western intellectualism and by developing the self. Mr. Burney aptly avers that Iqbal's "theory of the self is the reaction of a high intellect and a sensitive heart to the political bondage of his country. It is only by "achieving their maximum possible potential", individually and collectively, that the Indians could assert their right to freedom. Coupled with determined, disinterested action, this could usher in a resurgence for revitalising the sagging spirits of the Indians. Rejecting any doctrine based on injustice, exploitation and hatred, Iqbal's approach is essentially moral, spiritual and humanistierian.

What is often ignored is that Iqbal should not be dubbed as unpatriotic simply because he lauds humanitarianism and spurns aggressive nationalism that generates mindless rivalry for supremacy. What Iqbal sought as an antidote to the Western venom was, no doubt, within Islamic framework, but it also stressed Iqbal's quest for "an international order based upon brotherhood and unity of mankind and man's premacy in the universal design. "It is pertinent to note that even during and after his pan-Islamist period Iqbal's love for India never dwindled and reverential references to India

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are scattered throughout his poetry. His humanism is also evident from the anecdotes narrated by Mr. Burney. His heart always winced at the suffering of the Indians and he strove to awaken India's consciousness of its wretced lot by referring to India's past glory and the potential of the Indians to etch out a bright future. He pays glowing tributes to non-Muslim religious, social and political thinkers. His philosophy of detached action ows much to Lord Krishna and his Gita. An ardent admirer of Bhartrihari, Iqbal believes, like him, that truth can be realised not through reason but through love. His notions of the immortality of soul reflect the influence of Vedanta and the Upanishadas. In fact, Iqbal's concept of Self (Khudi), Action (Amal) and Detachment (Fakr) draw their sustenance from Indian philosophy. Mr. Burney aptly says that "On the political plane, Gandhiji's satyagraha was an assertion of the ego as defined by Iqbal; on the intellectual plane Iqbal's emphasis on ego was his satyagraha against the imperialist power."

Mr. Burney's assertion that Iqbal never conceived Pakistan as it ultimately emerged is based upon Iqbal's letters and his own statements corraborated by his contemporaries. Iqbal wrote in a letter: "I propose to create a Muslim province within the Indian Federation". Rahmat Ali's concept of a separate Dominion directly related to England must have appeared to him to be a sort of "Walt Disney's Dreamland" or a "Wellsian nightmare" as it was tantamount to a Balkanisation of India. As Aziz Ahmed says, "It is one of the myths of Pakistani nationalism to saddle Iqbal with the parentage of Pakistan". Mr. Burney feels that this myth has been strengthened by a misunderstanding of Iqbal's concept of nationalism and patriotism. It goes to the credit of Mr. Burney that he logically evolves his inferences that Iqbal, who all along stood for national cohesion could never advocate separatism, fundamentalism and partition. He knew that the Western domination aimed at disintegrating East by creating discord and disenssions and could not support any divisive or disruptive proposal.

A great charm of the book is the beautiful verse translations of Iqbal's poems by Dr. Syeda Saiyidain Hameed. The renderings, true

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to the word and spirit of the original, succeed in conveying much of the flavour and verve of the original.

This book is a welcome addition to Iqbaliat in more than one way. Coming at a time when India is fraught with fissiparus forces, it has much relevance. Besides rehabilitating Iqbal as a patriot-poet and providing a fillip to further explorations in this direction, this timely treatise will go a long way in re-asserting the essential unity in the plurality of our cultural heritage.

—AZAD GULATI

P.V. DHAMIJA, *Cracks in the Wall.* New Delhi: Prestige Books, 1989.

P.V. Dhamija's collection of thirty-six poems is prefaced by an essay by D. Prempati on 'Contemporary Indian Poetry' (written in English or other Indian languages), and has a Foreword by Shiv K. Kumar. Dhamija's assertion that poetry could be defined only negatively is largely acceptable though poets and critics belonging to different 'schools' might well contend it. Poetry is the best mode of contemplation for Dhamija, and his 'beliefs' as prefaced to the book, do not talk much about the manner and method of articulation—the degrees and levels that contemplation might involve—in putting on a differential network of relationships constituted of images and symbols, which, if distinctly used, inevitably form a distinct medium of poet's own. It will not be an hindsight to say that Dhamija's "Preface" invokes the old New Critical dichotomy between the form and the content. However, his poem "Voices of Time" illustrates what I am saying :

Wave-length is not a matter of chance acquisition;
Which you happen to possess despite yourself.
You may cultivate the length
That will serve you the best.

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D. Prempati's article perhaps would better have decorated the pages of a journal specialising in Indian poetry in (all) Indian languages, for that would have allowed the reader to go to the materiality of the poems in all their nakedness without any prefabricated motivation or the sense of being into the (vicious ?) circle when it was really time to have been out of it.

If the above sounds as negative as all attempts at defining poetry turn out to be, I would emphasize that Dhamija's poetry tries to approach that rare combination of prose and poetic sensibility not very common in Indian poetry in English being written today. In the process, sometimes, the poetry is lost in the prose and prose in the poetry. This may tax the conscience at one place and delight the sensibility at the other. The poems remind one of an Eliot or a Whitman's sensibility whose colloquialism shocks as well as renovates our feelings of novelty and of experiencing the experience. The poems also exhibit a high sense of drama (not necessarily accentuated by the accompanying syntax, diction and imagery) and perhaps an unconscious romantic sensibility at work (Dhamija's "the other voice") decorating stray lines in distinct strokes of imagination. "The Bat Fell Down" and "The Puppet Show" will illustrate this. The latter poem begins : "The puppet show with its seeming life,/Waxes into real drama./With its power and passion." One, looking for the hybernating sense of intense rhythm and a diction which unfolds meanings endlessly in its endless repertory, will perhaps ask for too much from Dhamija's poems. One does not get the sense of Blakean Imagination or Coleridgean which overpowers and transforms images and symbols into a highly distinct vision. That may be one reason one has missed the real lyric in Indian poetry in English after Sarojini Naidu, though a majority of poets have been writing lyrics and not epics.

There is no dearth of contemporary images in Dhamija's poems ("A Wedding, " "A Visit to Bokaro Steel City," etc.) but there could be little disagreement that real poetry is not made *with* words, it is made *through* them. In defense of Dhamija, it would have to be conceded that he has a very delicate sensibility at work (precisely Shiv K. Kumar's assertion), but cracks in the wall by no means

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should imply cracks in authorial sensibility and intention. Consider "The Romance of Poverty" :

If you have never been poor,
It is pointless to be rich.
Set against a light-shaded backdrop,
A colourful set has a peculiar charm
And enlivens the stage.

This might be a little witty, a little symbolic, but where is the transforming power (of images and symbols as agents) that the witty symbolization should have led the reader into ? Many of the poems in the collection lead one to the feeling generally associated with the notion of the "absurd" in contemporary critical parlance. An over dove-tailing of the contemporaneous in contemporary life by no means adds to the aesthetic enjoyment that all poetry should primarily generate. Probably that is what justifies continued writing of poetry. For example, there is a lot of difference between the transforming power of the 'Soul-Embrace" and some other poems in the collection, but an over reliance upon the poetry of statement kills the beauty at a place wherefrom otherwise it would have emanated. In the "Soul-Embrace" the poet says what should have been left unsaid :

Any more words were unutterable.
Any more bliss was unthinkable.

Many other poems in the collection show Dhamija's competent use of alliteration, assonance, and even metaphor, but the analogue (which alone universalizes the emotion) and an emotion which alone cements the differential network, are missing. And this is where the poems as lyrics break, though brokenness is by no means an (un) lyrical madness in itself. It does have a differential value and Dhamija's collection does make a contribution which is as differential as it is distinct

— *CHARU SHEEL SINGH*

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R.N. RAI, *Theory of Drama: Comparative Study of Aristotle and Bharata.* New Delhi Classical Publishing Company, 1992.

Aristotle has been the most influential writer in the development of Western thought on critical and aesthetic principles of literature. Bharata's Natya Shastra is considered to be an encylopaedia of Indian dramaturgy. Dr. R.N. Rai has tried to give a comparative study of their theory of drama. He has established parallelisms between their theories on nature, function and structure of drama as well as between their views on the heroes and the language of drama. The book is based on his post-doctoral work for which Dr. R.N. Rai has been awarded D. Litt.

The work has been divided into eight chapters. Leaving aside the first chapter, introduction, and the last chapter, conclusion, each chapter is sub-divided into three sections. The first section deals with Aristotle's views, the second deals with Bharata's views on the same topic and the third attempts to draw parallelisme between the first two sections.

In the introduction Dr. Rai rightly states that though Aristotle's *Poetics* is based on a few Greek plays, 'its applicability is more or less universal.' The significance lies in the fact that it places before the readers such crucial issues as mimes, iscatharsis, plot, character, style and tragic irony. In the first three chapters Aristotle discusses his theory of imitation, putting emphasis on the means of imitation, object of imitation and manner of imitation. Then he discusses the origin of poetry and its development into the forms of tragedy and comedy. Aristotle defines tragedy and talks about plot, character, thought, diction, song and spectacle. He compares epic poetry and tragedy and shows the superiority of tragedy, as it has all the elements of an epic together with music and spectacle. Here Dr. Rai explains Aristotle's thought, song and spectacle leaving plot, character and diction for detailed study. He says: "Thought is in fact the intellectual element which is implied in all rational conduct of the dramatic personae." Melody is in the form of a chant, a rhythnic accentuation or a stylized speech, spectacle is considered to be a "minor part of the poetic art."

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Bharata's *NS* is a remarkable work having a very wide range and a deep psychological insight. It instructs the dramatist, the director, the actors and the spectators. Written at about the same time as Aristotle's *Poetics* Bharata's *NS* gives a detailed account of "the composite art of the drama", that is, the drama as composed, produced, presented on the stage.

In the second chapter Dr. Rai writes about the views of Aristotle and Bharata on the nature of drama which to him is 'imitation'. He says that Aristotle uses the word 'imitation' in the first chapter of *Poetics* and then discusses it. Bharata also uses the word anukriti (imitation) in the first chapter of *NS* saying the drama as I have devised, is an imitation of the actions and conducts of people, which is rich in various emotions and which depicts different situations. Bharata uses the term imitation in the context of drama whereas Aristotle uses it in general for poetry. Aristotle points out that the objects of imitation in all arts are 'men in action.' In tragedy the men are serious while in comedy they are trivial. Aristotle in Chapter XIII is willing to consider *Iphigenia in Tauris* which has a happy ending, as an ideal tragedy. Bharata points out that drama should imitate "the feelings, emotions, sentiments and the actions of the seven continents". But Dr. Rai leaves out a very significant difference between the two on this point. Bharata does not talk about tragedy at all nor does he differentiate between the actions of "serious" men and 'trivial' men. There is no concept of tragedy in Bharata's *NS* as dramas are presented for pure entertainment, for real pleasure bordering on bliss.

In the third chapter Dr. Rai makes a comparative study of Aristotle's theory of 'catharsis' and Bharata's theory of rasa. He writes that "without adhering to any specific school of psychopathology it is better to interpret catharsis as an aesthetic experience," Dr. Rai quotes the interpretation of a number of critics regarding the theory of catharsis. But inspite of them he comes to the conclusion that 'Tragedy depicts human dignity and elevation even in the midst of trial and tribulation, failure and frustration, depression and death. This sense of elevation and upliftment is the main function of tragedy which is known as catharsis". This comes

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closer to Bharata's view of rasa while the western critics suggest purgation as the meaning of catharsis. The quotation from *Hamlet* on page 64, where according to Dr. Rai the impact of Ophelia's separation on Hamlet has been vividly depicted by Polonius in Act II, Scene 2, is not apt. It is not certain that Hamlet has gone mad or that he is in his present state of mind because of his separation from Ophelia. Bharata's Karuna Rasa (Pathetic sentiment) may be compared to Aristotle an concept of pity and his Bhayanaka uasa (Terrible sentiment) to Aristotle's fear but the two Rasas are much wider in importance. Dr. Rai has not pointed out this difference in these concepts. He only states that according to Aristotle the emotions of pity and fear are interrelated and inter dependent while Bharata feels that Karuna rasa and Bhayanaka rasa are independent rasas.

In chapter fourth Dr. Rai gives a very beautiful comparison between the views of Aristotle and Bharata regarding the plot or the structure of the drama. Both Aristotle as well as Bharata have laid emphasis on the supremacy of plot in drama. Aristotle calls it the 'soul of drama', Bharata calls it the 'body of drama' as Rasa is the soul of drama.

Aristotle points out that action should be complete, whole and of a certain magnitude. A whole according to him, is that which has a begining, a middle and an end. This shows that he puts emphasis on a close cohesion of causes and effects in a plot. Aristotle talks about two types of ploty, simple and complex. He feels that peripety or several and recognition are the integral parts of the complex ploty. Peripety should be based on hamartia or a tragic error on the part of the protagonist. Bharat talks of a plot in which the hero moves towards the attainment of his objectives and at the end succeeds in fulfilling his desires. There are no unities of action, time or place for Bharata. There is an oversubtilized classification of the elements of plot by Bharata which Dr. Rai has explained in detail. But there are some strange sentences like " Shylock with the help of his bond wants to take away the life of Antonio but he is finally entrapped in it."

In chapter five Dr. Rai has given a detailed comparison between the views of Aristotle and Bharata regarding the the hero.

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Aristotle points out that the hero should be good, appropriate, life like and consistent. Bharata classifies hero as dhirodatta (self controlled and exalted), dhiralalita (self-controlled and light hearted). dhirprasanta (self-controlled and calm) and dhiroddhata (self- controlled and haughty). The term dhira is very close to Aristotle's requirement of the goodness of character. Aristotle talks of tragic flaw or hamartia but as there is no concept of tragedy in *NS*, Bharata does not refer to a tragic flow. Dr. Rai has taken up two short plays by Bhasa, *Urubhangam* and *Karnabhangam* to show that their heroes Duryodhana and Karna have tragic flaws in their character. He may be right but these are not mentioned by Bharata Muni. Dr. Rai very rightly points out that Aristotle does not talk about the role of a heroine in a tragedy while Bharata has discussed various types of heroines and their respective characteristics.

In the sixth chapter Dr. Rai tries to find some similarity between Aristotle's views and those of Bharata regarding the structure of a play. But there is a great difference between the Greek pattern and the Indian pattern of classification. Dr. Rai rightly quotes:" unlike the three fold division of the Greeks based on a consideration of the sentiment involved, such as tragic, comic and an admixture of both the Indian classification depended on the subject matter as well as technique of construction and presentation. Bharata divides drama into ten catagories: Nataka, Prakarma, Natika, Samavakara, Jhamrga, Dina, Vyayoga, Anka, Prahasame, Dhana, Vithi. Out of these Nataka and Prakarana are the major varieties. All the Sanskrit plays end on a happy note but they are not comedies in the Aristotlean sense of the term. They do not deal with the lower type of people who are trivial and ludicrous. They are not even tragedies as death and disaster are not their subject. The characters may have to undergo mental suffering but they do not meet with death or disaster.

In the seventh chapter the views of both Aristotle and Bharata regarding the language of drama are compared and contrasted in detail. Diction, according to Aristotle, is one of the six elements of a tragedy. He talks of language embellished with each kind of artistic ornament. Bharata has devoted four chapters to the discussion

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of the use of language. Bharata talks about thirty six embellishments of language, ten merits and ten demerits. Aristotle puts emphasis on metaphor while Bharata refers to four figures of speech—simile, metaphor, condensed expression and alliteration. Bharata refers to the different dialects which should be used by different people in the play. He feels that the characters should use Sanskrit or Prakrit according to their status in society. Aristotle just refers to the use of rhythm and song while Bharata thoroughly examines the two. He also devotes one full chapter to the modes of address and intonation. This shows Bharata's practical insight and keen observation. But as Dr. Rai rightly says his excessive divisions and classifications appear to be needless and confusing.

In the concluding chapter Dr. Rai examines the relevance of the views of Aristotle and Bharata in our times. Aristotle's term, 'catharsis' and Bharata's theory of rasa have remained as relevant as ever. Dr. Rai has effectively illustrated the changes that have taken place in the qualities of a tragic hero down the ages. He points out that a mixture of comic with tragic is more effective than a consistently tragic tone. He also shows that the use of sub plots may heighten the effect and may lead to a greater unity of action. This is close to Bharata's view. But in the latter part of the conclusion Dr. Rai once again deals with similarities and differences between Aristotle and Bharata. In the last paragraph he reverts to the earlier discussion and says that the works are still very useful. He feels that these two theories should be modified wherever necessary. All in all it is a commendable work in the sphere of comparative literature.

—*PRATIBHA TYAGI*

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DISSERTATION ABSTRACTS

RENU TRIVEDI, *A Study of Matthew Arnold's 'Sohrab and Rustum' in the Light of Rasa Theory*, M. Phil. Diseration, Meerut University.

The term 'Rasa' dates back to the vedic period. In the *Rigveda* it is used for various kinds of meanings such as milk of cow, honey and sap of plants. Bharat Muni, who is acknowledged as the first exponent of this doctrine, which has been systematically set forth in his well known treatise on Dramaturgy called the *Natyashastra*, has derived the word 'Rasa' from the *Atharva Veda*.

'Rasa' is actually an aesthetic experience felt by human beings. In the phrase Rasa Theory 'Rasa' means poetic relish, which is a mental phenomenon and is composed of feelings which are aroused in the mind of the perceiver as a psychological reaction to his perception of a literary piece. It is a sort of bliss which leads him towards self-realization and self-fulfilment. This state has been called 'Brahmanand Sahodar.'

'Rana' is essentially designed to produce aesthetic experience in us since 'Rasanispattih' is the supreme function of art. Bharat Muni observes that no object can be properly comprehended without the aid of 'Rasa.' It is produccd from a combination of determinants, consequents and the transitory feelings – "Vibhavanubhava – Vyabhichari samyogadrasa nispattih" [Bharat, *Natya Shastra*, Ch. VI. P. 71].

Out of the eight Rasas – Sringar, Hasya, Karuna, Raudra, Vira,

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Bhayanaka, Bibhatsa and Adbhuta – in *Sohrab and Rustum* Karuna, Vira, Raudra and Bhayanaka are prominent. *Sohrab and Rustum* is a very pathetic poem. The element of grief in this poem is the result of the lie told by Tohmina to Rustum. When Sohrab is born to her, she, out of fear that her husband, Rustum will train her son as a warrior, informs Rustum that a girl is born to her. This lie very ironically becomes the cause of Sohrab's death at the hands of his father Rustum. Thus, Sohrab's death, Rustum's repentance and mother's tears arouse the strong feeling of pity and pathos in the hearts of the readers.

In *Sohrab and Rustum* we have many an event and example exhibiting Vira Rasa. Matthew Arnold with a great skill describes the fight of Sohrab and Rustum. Both of them are very valiant. It is their emotions of enthusiasm, valour and rage that are the constant sources of the heroic sentiment, i.e. Vira Rasa in the poem.

Raundra Rasa – Furious Sentiment is based on the dominant emotion of anger, i.e., 'Krodh'. In *Sohrab and Rustum* it is Rustum who exhibits this sentiment. When duel is decided the two warriors stand face to face. They fight. Sohrab fells his father down into the dust. This is the moment when a warrior like Rustum car never bridle his anger. Rustum gets angry, and taking his spear starts fighting furiously with his son Sohrab.

In *Sohrab and Rustum* there are also events of Bhayanaka Rasa, i.e. Sentiment of Terror which is itself based on the dominant emotion of fear. In the duel when Sohrab continuously strikes his father and cuts through his shield, the atmosphere becomes gloomy. The terror is all the more enhanced by the thunder of clouds and lightning flashes. All begin to tremble with fear when Rustum's horse Ruksh utters a dreadful cry.

In a word, the language of emotions knows no bars of time or space. This is why the painful and pathetic sentiments of *Sohrab and Rustum* may touch every human heart. Also, the poem abounds in the events of the Vira, Raudra and Bhayanaka Rasas.

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RIMA KAUSHIK, *Religious and Moral Beliefs of Robert Browning,* M. Phil. Dissertation, Meerut University.

Robert Browning's religious and moral beliefs are characterized by his staunch faith in the supremacy of spiritual values. Hardly there is any other poet more consistently religious and Christian than Browning. His religion was not one superimposed on his personality. His life was quite literally given to God. During the latter half of the nineteenth century, a wave of materialism swept over English and it was significant that Browing standing out as a Christian and religious poet, flourished during an age of unbelief.

Browning's views on nature, man and God remained consistent throughout his life. He was religious by temperament because his mother was intensely pious, and she inculcated in him the fundamental values of religion. His views and convictions remained unaffected by the growing tide of materialism. His views on God and His relationship to man were roughly sketched in *Pauline,* fully rounded in *Paracelsus,* and further elaborated in *Sordello.*

In his poetry Browning endeavours to know the secret of the world. He proposes to understand God and His world and all His relationship with the human soul. He regards God in His essential being and nature as unknowable. Man cannot attain the absolute because of his earthly limitations, but he should never cease to aspire towards that absolute. Browning belived in the incarnation of God as Christ. The incarnation is the eternal identification of man and God in one spirit of loving sacrifice. Through the miracle of the incarnation, God becomes accessible to man, and in Christ there is a direct communion with God.

It is Browning's strong belief that the only bond between God and man is love. God can be apprehended by man through faith and love only. He believes that it is only God who is real and perfect in the world. It was due to his staunch belief in God's presence that Browning became a prophet poet for his readers in the years of doubt and confusion.

Browning's faith in the immortality of soul is also very firm. He

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believes in the existence of another world and rebirth of creatures. The fundamental tenets of Browning's religion are immortality of soul, free will, and presence of God everywhere in the world. In his first poem he declares his belief in God, truth and love. In *Paracelsus* he emphasizes that intellect without love, morality and characterr is most perilous of all the forces. In *Sordello* he glorifies man's love for the poor and the down-trodden.

Browning's vast knowledge of the world never degenarates into worldliness. He minutely observes all the aspects of it. He does not shun but seeks its sad and seamy side. This results in his robust optimism. It is his belief that a constant struggle against evil is good. It is, according to him, by virtue of the evil forces that man never forgets good and God. In a nutshell, Browning's religious and moral beliefs are the outcome of his staunch faith in the omnipresent, omnipotent and ominscient Supreme Being, immotrality of soul, and the cycle of birth, death and rebirth.

RISHI PAL SINGH, *East-West Interactions in Ruth Prawer Jhabvala's Fiction*, M. Phil. Dissertation, Meerut University.

Ruth Prawer Jhabvala presents with the aptness of a social realist the primitive and backward east and the modern and rich west. Almost all her novels are preoccupied with social themes. The interaction between Eastern and Western societies, causing encounter and friction, is especially the dominant theme in the novels of the second phase of her literary career. The social interaction flourishes as the Indians and Westerners meet, have mutual support and confidence, fall in love and get united in marriages. In her novels— *A Backward Place, A New Dominion*, and *Heat and Dust*— Jhabvala reveals how and on what grounds the interaction between the East and West occurs.

A Backward Place is the portrait of marriage between an Indian youth, Bal, and an English girl, Judy. Their individualism is accepted by the traditional joint-family of the former. Judy adapts herself to the family. On the contrary, Etta another European lady

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in the novel, utterly condemns India and is disgustful to everything that is Indian. She clings to the Western modes of life and offensively criticizes the Indian social bond of marriage. As far as economic progress and material advancement are concerned, India is far behind the European countries. Judy, by marrying Bal, has herself chosen India a land of poverty and scarcity, and is adamant to her commitment of living patiently with her middle-class husband. On the other hand, Etta experiences rough and tough Indian life, but clings to everything which is European, and hates India that challenges her Western luxuries, personality and taste for life.

In *A Backward Place* Jhabvala exhibits how the Westerners are magnetically attracted by India's great religious thinking, elevated spirituality and rich cultural heritage. Her western characters influenced by Indian religion can be categorized in three groups. First, Judy, a British girl with all knowledge of Indian religion and rituals, has least interest and faith in them. Secondly, Etta, a Hungarian beauty, contemptuously regards India's religion and traditionalism inferior to western materilism. And thirdly, Clarissa, who knows nothing of Indian religion and spiritualism, is in deep love with all that is Indian.

In *A New Dominion* there are travellers from Western countries coming into interaction with Indians. *A New Dominion* is, of course, India, but it is not an-arna of darkness of utter conflicts, rather it is a new promising phenomenon. In this new complex of East-West interactions or relationships the West is represented by three girls—Lee, Margaret and Evia, who are on a spiritual adventure in India and wish to merge with Indian lofty traditions. Lee, unlike Etta of *A Backward Place*, feels elevated and homely in the company of Indians and has a gush to lead life like an Indian. The three self-seeking girls renounce their western social values and merge with Indian Hindu society.

In her another novel, *Heat and Dust,* Jhabvala presents India as a major obsession with the Europeans. It is a sordid tale of the Westerners coming to India either for having different experiences of life, or on a quest for spirital solace. This novel particularly women, in Indian society, and their interaction with their counter-

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parts. Also, in this novel the novelist introduces the uneasy combination of the sacred and the profane, the spiritual and the sexual in several situations. The indulgence in sex of the two pairs of lovers—Olivia and Nawab, and the narrator and Inder Lal—at the fertility shrine indicates the Western women hypnotised by Indian religion.

In short, Ruth thabvala's novels emphatically establish that notwithstanding her poverty and material backwardness India attracts the Westerners, and imprersses and influences them by her never-failing religion, elevated spirituality and rich cultural heritage. However, there are also certain characters like Etta who never get adjusted with the Indian social set-up and culture. Ruth Jhabvala's treatment of East-West malaise is unique in the sense that even after realizing the constant confrontation between the two she does not seem to announce openly any enmity between them.

—*NAND KUMAR*

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